

A/N: Alright, this is based off of a challenge by Rorschach's Blot, the author of Lord of Caer Azkaban, where Harry discovers he's the Lord of Azkaban after being sent there; he must be innocent. Credit for the title goes to Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic. Malak says to Revan at the Star Forge: "Hero, villain, savior, conqueror. You are all and none of these things, Revan." Just thought it fit.

Disclaimer for the whole story: Harry Potter belongs to J.K. Rowling and Warner Bros., not me. If I owned Harry Potter, do you think there would be any doubt about Sirius living? I didn't think so.

Hero, Villain, Saviour, Conqueror

Prologue: Sentence

The messy-haired boy sat erect, ignoring the bonds chafing his wrists as he glared coolly at Fudge. "I am telling you for the last time, Fudge, I did not murder them."

The chubby bastard glared at him right back. "There is absolutely no way that that is possible, Mr. Potter. We gave you Veritaserum, you confessed to the crime. All for innocent?" No one in the room raised their hand. Despite the pain he felt inside, the look on Harry's face was nothing short of serene. "Guilty?" Every hand raised.

The boy was receiving more glares than he ever had in his entire life. The Weasleys, Hermione, Remus, Dumbledore... All of them were looking at him as though he were the worst sort of traitor. But he did not protest as Fudge droned on endlessly about how he would be sent to Azkaban with two life sentences and no chance of parole, and ask him if he had any last words before he was taken away.

He turned his bright green gaze on the occupants of the room, browsing about and looking at no one in particular. "You beat me down," was all he said. "You beat me down, and every time, when you realize that you're wrong, you expect me to get up and save your goddamn sorry asses again. Well, it won't happen this time. I'm not just your bloody savior anymore. You can save yourselves."

The Dementors came then. They floated in, and the screaming started in his mind. He was unlocked from his chair once the Dementors had reached him and each grabbed a hold of one of his arms. He passed out before he was pulled onto the shuttle boat to the prison, before he saw the sympathetic gaze the ferryman gave him, before he was unceremoniously deposited into a cell and before, at his first contact with Azkaban, a glowing white rune appeared on his left palm.

Harry James Potter was unconscious through it all.

A/N: Yes, it was short, it was a Prologue, and I wanted to get the idea out because the evil rabid plot bunnies had bitten... Does it suck? Does it rock? Review and tell me!

Aerin

Chapter One: Swirling Thoughts

Harry paced his cell. Three days, only three bloody days, and already he was struggling to stay sane. For the billionth time he regarded the rune on his hand and wondered.

How had it gotten there? Perhaps all prisoners had one? But no, he had never seen a rune on Sirius' hand... Sirius. The pain of the loss came flooding back and he pushed it down, trying to concentrate on the matter at hand.

Maybe anyone on the island had it, and it wasn't there when they left? He supposed it was possible, but what would the point be? Maybe it wasn't generic; maybe it was unique to him. Maybe it was only given to high-security prisoners? But then Sirius would still have had one... No, maybe it was some kind of tracker, and they had only implemented it after Sirius had escaped... That made sense. That was probably what it was.

So that meant that even if he did escape, it would be hopeless. He would just be recaptured again.

His depressing line of thought, and all thought for the moment at that, ended as a group of Dementors swept past his cell and he passed out.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Nimi walked towards Lieutenant Grenn. "Lieutenant," she said mildly.

He immediately snapped to attention. "Captain Stardreamer, ma'am!"

She grinned. "At ease, soldier. I'm here to relieve you. Lieutenant Porschiabeleia is out today with the flu, and having potions poured down her throat by Helene. That means I'm filling in, so you can go catch up with... What was this one's name? Anna?"

He scowled at her. "It's Georgia."

Nimi shrugged. "What do I know, other than they're all blond, size 5, and bimbos with absolutely no brain." She playfully smacked him on the arm. "Go have a good time, soldier."

He grinned at her, saluted, and almost ran down the corridor. "Kids today," she said, shaking her head with a sigh, completely ignoring the fact that he was almost ten years her senior.

At fourteen, about half of the Azkaban Militia thought that she was far too young to be a Captain, and the other half felt that she was far too skilled to be limited to that. Unfortunately, her superiors agreed with the first half. And while they couldn't demote her without extreme reason, they weren't about to promote her either.

'Maybe I'll petition to the Council,' she thought idly before snorting unladylike. 'Yeah right. The only thing they're concerned with is finding the Heir,'

With good reason, she had to admit; the Isle of Azkaban had gone far too long without a Lord. The past one had died nearly 50 years ago during the war against Grindlewald, and since then the Ministry had slowly but surely taken over the Isle. She knew that if they didn't find the Heir soon, Azkaban would be complete Ministry domain and become one giant prison.

She didn't like to think of where she'd go if that happened; she had rarely left the Isle in her life, and from what she had seen hated London's Magical Community. Perhaps Ireland? She had heard that magic was far more abundant and lenient there. She had a bit of Irish heritage mixed in with the Azkabanian, and always wanted to see the place.

She patrolled the corridors, absentmindedly tugging on a strand of light brown hair with part of a dark brown lock mixed in. That was the thing about her hair; while she considered it a dark brown, it was filled with strands of hair such a light brown it could easily be mistaken for blond. The streaks had gotten wider over the years, and now it was hard to tell which was the base color and which were the streaks.

Her chestnut brown gaze peered into every cell she passed, ignoring the remarks that came. The pleading, the begging, the insane

cackling... All was common at the prison. What was uncommon, though, was for a prisoner to be passed out on the floor of his cell.

If the Lord was in control, she wouldn't have thought twice about going in and checking on the man, but as the Ministry was, she knew that she would be breaking several of their newly laid-down "laws" that basically gave the Azkabanians no freedom and the prisoners no kindness. At all.

With a heavy sigh, she continued onto the next cell, never knowing that the man in the cell she had passed would change the course of her life, and many others lives, for years to come.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Dumbledore settled into his chair. "Stupid lad," he muttered to himself. Why had the boy had to go and ruin everything? It had all been going so well; the boy had almost been ready to fight the Dark Lord and save the world, and then he had to go and kill them and get himself arrested.

Snape entered and sat down in the chair in front of Dumbledore's desk, sneering. "I always knew that the boy was trouble," he hissed. "From the moment I laid eyes on him, I knew that nothing good would come from that stupid Potter boy."

Dumbledore nodded sadly. "Yes Severus, I should have listened to you. You were right about Mr. Potter; we should have just left him at the Dursleys' and never sent him his letter."

Snape nodded, and the two sat in an amicable silence, not knowing just how wrong they were.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Ron and Hermione were talking.

"I can't believe we never noticed."

"Me neither."

"We're such imbeciles!"

"Uh-huh."

"I mean, we should have at least seen that he was turning Dark!"

"Yep."

"How could we have missed it! Oh, I'm such a fool!"

"Yea, sounds right."

"You too!"

"Uh-huh."

"But really, we could have saved all of those lives!"

"Yep."

"Not to mention Cedric- he probably killed the poor guy himself!"

"Guess so."

"And Sirius- I bet that he wanted him to fall!"

"Prob'ly."

"Well, maybe not, he did seem to love the guy like a father..."

"Dunno."

"But still!"

"Yep."

It was a rather one-sided conversation.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

Remus threw something at the wall. He didn't really know what it was... nor did he particularly care. His best friend's son. His other best friend's godson. The son of the woman he considered a sister.

And what did the prodigal son do? He threw their trust, their support in the wind and committed murder. He had even admitted to considering joining the Dark Lord. The question that reverberated in his mind... Why?

Why would he betray them like that? What had they done? What had the ones he'd brutally slaughtered done? Nothing. Nothing at all. So why had he done what he had?

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

Luna sat, her head bowed, her hair falling around her face like a wave so that no one could see the tears that she cried.

He was innocent. She knew he was innocent. They were too similar. She could almost, almost read his mind, and she knew that no matter what happened, he would never do something like that.

Of course, when she had expressed her opinion to her father he had locked her in her room to prevent her attending the trial. And when she had heard of his conviction, she had started to cry.

She hadn't stopped since.

How could they lock him away? After all he had done for them, for the world, they just said "Oh, thanks very much, now you can go rot away in prison reliving your worst memories."

What had he done to them? He had dared to save all of their lives time and time again? Why would they lock him up for that? Why couldn't they understand? Why would the boy who had saved them all so many times hurt people like that?

Her friendships had all ended when she had written Ginny, Neville, Hermione and Ron to ask if they thought Harry innocent as well. She had gotten four howlers back.

With a sniffle, she fell backwards onto her bed. Maybe he would get out, like his Godfather before him. Maybe, just maybe...

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

Harry rolled over on his back and stared at the ceiling. Bored. Yes, that just about summed up his life right now. That and shocked, horrified, scared, and betrayed.

He thought back to his trial. He wondered who had brewed the Veritaserum. Snape, perhaps? That would explain why it hadn't worked properly. Or maybe something else. He didn't know. All he knew was that he was innocent.

He had thought it odd when Sirius said that innocence wasn't a happy thought, back in his third year. To him, innocence had meant knowing that you didn't do it, that you didn't have to feel bad about it. That wasn't true, he knew that now.

Innocence brought thoughts. Thoughts of those who hadn't believed you, and those who should have. Thoughts of the people who had died, even if he hadn't been the direct cause. Thoughts of the hellhole he was now stuck in because of Voldemort and his bloody Death Eaters.

And Azkaban Prison was just that- a hellhole. The prisoners were served gruel, if it could be classified as that even- Harry had found the tail of a worm in his once. He had idly wondered if it belonged to Pettigrew before tossing it aside.

He slept on the cold slimy floor with nothing between them and the green goop that oozed through the stones than one small, tiny blanket that often had to be used for the small bit of warmth it provided.

They weren't given uniforms; they remained dressed in whatever they had had on. Harry's robes were already dirty, and looking around he could see prisoners with robes more worn than Sirius' had been after his escape.

In the corner of the cell was a lavatory... well, it was actually a pit that reeked. Harry ad learned to stay as far away from that particular corner as possible.

Human guards passed once every six hours or so. No one interesting that he had seen, but he had missed one or two of them because of being in a Dementor-induced semi-coma. He supposed that the tall, skinny man with the curly chestnut hair that always seemed to be wearing a smile was interesting enough, but his open face really left nothing to the imagination.

You couldn't speculate about him really... it was obvious that he was happy about something, probably a girlfriend from the goofy-looking smile. Nope, no fun. Better than the Dementors, though. They swept through every hour or two, an Harry passed out almost every time. Once he had managed to stay awake, but that was because when he had fallen he had bumped his head on the wall and immediately awakened with an "Ouch".

He wondered what cell Sirius had stayed in. Had it been this one? Or another? Probably another, as there were so many of them. From his calculations, he guessed it was about 1200. And his cell was eight paces by ten, and the ceiling had 8,942 little holes in it...

Oh yes, he was bored.

Chapter Two: Ghosts in the Soul

Nimi glared at Apollo. "And why wasn't I informed sooner?"

Her elder brother winced at the strength of her glare, but, to his credit, he didn't back away. "Because you hate these things," he said calmly.

Her glare grew darker. "Exactly. I could have found a way to avoid it."

Apollo grinned. "Exactly. Besides, great-Aunt Dione says, and I quote, 'if she doesn't start coming to these things, she'll completely screw her chances of landing herself a young man. Pass the firewhisky.'"

Nimi, despite herself, grinned. "Trust the old woman to get herself loaded." Then she sighed. "Pollo, do I really hafta go?"

He ruffled her hair playfully. "Yes, you do, 'Mi."

She heaved another heavy sigh. "All right, all right. But you know that I don't own a single dress."

"Who said you had to come in a dress?" Apollo said with a small laugh. "Wear jeans and a tee for all I care. The only one it'll matter to is great-Auntie Dione, and we both know she'll be drunk as a hog."

Nimi grinned. "Alright then, I s'pose I'll come."

Apollo clapped her on the back. "Thanks, sis. I'll see you at nine, alright?" She nodded, and with a last smile her brother left. She leaned up against her now closed door.

"Why?" she moaned to herself. Her great-Aunt Dione's parties were always the worst. They always ended with a bunch of old ladies bombarding her, asking why she hadn't settled down yet, and why on earth she had joined the militia. She always ended up running away.

She looked at the clock. Six. That meant she had three hours. She had to patrol at eight, but that should be over by about nine, and Porschiabeleia should be back tomorrow, hopefully...

An hour and a half later, and she had finally decided what to wear and laid it out. The peasant shirt was black, and the jeans loose with a flare cut. Hurrying out to switch places with Grenn, she gave one glance back to the outfit on her bed before nodding and locking her door.

"Lieutenant," she said to Grenn with a nod. He grinned at her and left, presumably to meet with Georgia again, and Nimi began her rounds.

And the future was set in motion as she noticed a light from one of the cells.

Unsure as to what it could be, she walked slowly forward, wand out, and opened the cell door and stepped in. A man was passed out on the floor- the same one she had seen yesterday, she recalled. Her heart clenched; had he been out that long? Performing a quick Stunning spell, just in case he was faking it, she hurried forward and turned him over.

There didn't seem to be anything wrong with him; he was breathing, and he looked almost... peaceful. Trying to see where the light was coming from, she finally looked on the palm of his left hand.

A sharp intake of breath could be heard.

She stared at the calloused hand resting in hers. 'It's probably just some sort of magical tattoo,' she thought dazedly. 'It can't be him. How could it be?'

She was torn. This man wore the Rune of Azkaban. So what did she do? If it was real, and she brought him, then he could get the Ministry to leave... But if she was wrong, and she brought him, she'd get fired. If she was wrong and she didn't bring him, it didn't matter, but if she was right and she didn't... Then she would have denied Azkaban its freedom, and that was more important to her than any job, even this one, which she loved so much.

Muttering a spell, she levitated the man towards the Hospital Wing. Breaking into a nervous run, she burst through the doors. "Helene!" she shrieked.

The short, skinny French-descended woman with the white-blond hair and bright blue eyes ran in. "What is it?" she asked, before catching sight of the floating man and gasping. "Oh, good lord! Here, put him here..." She helped Nimi lower him onto a bed. "What happened to him?"

Nimi shrugged helplessly. "I don't know, he was passed out on the floor of his cell..."

Helene's hand flew to her mouth. "Oh, Nimi, the Ministry..."

She cut the woman off. "I know, but I had a good reason for this. Look." She lifted the man's hand, and Helene gasped.

"Can it be...?" she whispered.

Nimi shrugged helplessly. "I don't know. We'd have to ask the Council."

Helene snapped to herself. "Right," she said calmly, "I'll see to him, and you use the network in my office to call the Council."

Nimi nodded and ran into Helene's office. She immediately scanned her hand over the large pad in front of a screen.

"Welcome, Nimi Stardreamer," a computerized voice came. "Who are you requesting?"

"Anyone from the Council," Nimi said briskly. There was a whirring, and then the screen flickered to life. A tired looking old man was standing in front of it. "Yes?" he asked politely.

Nimi bowed. "Master Besk'Ali, I am sorry to bother you, but... you see..." Somehow, she just couldn't think of how to say it.

"Yes?" the man snapped. "Spit it out, girl!"

Nimi turned bright red. "I apologize. It is just, you see... While I was on my rounds, filling in for my Lieutenant, I discovered a prisoner in one of the cells... Sir, he had the Rune of Azkaban, and it was glowing."

The Councilman stared at her. "Where are you?"

"Hospital Wing," she answered promptly.

Master Besk'Ali nodded curtly. "I shall assemble the Council members and meet you there."

Nimi nodded as well, and Master Besk'Ali signed off. After staring for a moment at the now-black screen, Nimi turned and briskly walked out of the office and back to Helene and the man.

"I got a hold of Master Besk'Ali," she said softly. "He's on his way."

Helene nodded. "Good. He's still out cold though," she said, gesturing to the unconscious figure of their possible Lord. "Near as I can tell, it was just Dementor Backlash. I've never seen a case this serious, though. He must have had a horrible life, if the Dementors could do this to him."

Nimi scrutinized him. Messy black hair, high cheekbones, thin face. Rather tall, it seemed, and though thin, not scrawny. She couldn't tell anything from what she could see; may haps once she could see his eyes. "It's rather odd, Helene. You say he was suffering from Dementor Backlash... but when I walked in, he looked so... so peaceful. Helene, he was smiling."

The woman stared at her. "Really?" Nimi nodded. "Perhaps..." Helene mused. "Perhaps, he was sucked down so deep, that he was able to... to escape the effects, to fall into a more natural sleep. Perhaps, Captain, he was dreaming."

Nimi opened her mouth to speak,. but at that moment, four men and three women, all in heavy-looking robes with their hair in various states of disarray, ran into the room. "Is this him?" Master Besk'Ali asked after catching his breath. Nimi nodded.

The Council walked forward, and Helene and Nimi respectfully backed away as they formed a half-circle around the bed. "How did you find him?" Master Kaitrinea asked.

Nimi retold her tale. "Do you think..." she asked hesitantly as she finished.

"We will have to examine the rune," Master Jineoa said softly.

Without speaking again, the Head of the Council, Master Troun'Farr'Haich picked up the man's left hand and traced the rune on the palm. A bright light blasted through the room, and Nimi and Helene covered their eyes. When the light cleared, the Council was all staring at the still unconscious man. "Our Lord has returned," Master Besk'Ali whispered before falling to the ground in a dead faint.

HeroVillainSaviousConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

Harry was dreaming.

He was a baby, about a year old he supposed, and he was sitting on his mother's lap while they watched his father and Remus and Sirius play Quidditch along with a woman he had never seen before. From what he could see, the woman had curly brown hair and violet eyes, and was smiling and laughing as though she would never stop.

He looked to his right, and saw another woman there. She had long, wavy blond hair and bright blue eyes. She held out her arms, and Harry found himself being lifted into her arms. She wrapped her arms around his waist, and he glanced at his mother for a moment before concentrating on the game again.

His father dove for a glint of gold, and the brown-haired woman immediately followed. Sirius and Remus hovered in the air, critically watching the dive, Remus was cheering for his father, and Sirius for "Mel".

His father caught the Snitch, but just barely, and, laughing like a maniac, ran over to where Harry was and hefted him onto his shoulders. "That," James Potter said with a laugh, "is your father kicking your godmother's ass!"

The female Seeker chuckled and hit his father in the arm. "You jerk, you're messing up his head!"

James stuck his tongue out at her. "No, I'm just telling him the truth."

To Harry's surprise, Sirius stepped forward wrapping his arm around the woman's waist and kissing her on the cheek with a small laugh. "Hey, you and I both know that she's the best Chaser Hogwarts has ever seen."

The woman blushed. "Oh, stop it Sir. I'm not that good."

Remus laughed. "Honestly, Mel, you're wonderful!"

The woman that had previously been holding him smiled and slid her hand into Remus'. "Remmy and Sirius are right, Melly. You're great!"

As the playful argument continued, Harry found himself being dragged away to another time, another place. He guessed that he was about seven months old in this one, and he was shakily standing next to his mother and walking over to his father, who's arms were outstretched with a humongous grin on his face.

"Come here, Prongs let!" James called. "Come to Daddy!"

Harry, to his embarrassment, giggled, and toddled over. He collapsed in his father's arms, looking at his mother, who had tears in her eyes. "Oh, my baby boy, so grown up, I'm so proud of you..."

The scene changed again. He seemed to be just over a year, and he was sitting in his crib, playing with a stuffed stag, wolf, dog, and, to his disgust, rat. He looked up at his mother and began to cry.

Lily, in the rocking chair beside the crib, immediately picked him up and held him close. "Shhh, shhhh, Harry, it's okay," she whispered. When he still didn't stop crying, she kissed his head and began to sing and rock.

"Dancing bears,

Painted wings,

Things I almost remember

And a song
Someone sings,
Once upon a December.
Someone holds me safe and warm,
Horses prance on a silver storm
Figures dancing gracefully
Across my memory...
Far away
Long ago,
Glowing dim as an ember
There's a place
I used to know
Once upon a December."

Harry looked up into his mother's face and felt a sudden, overwhelming sense of peace. She had a beautiful voice, and somehow the melody sounded so familiar to him...

To his disappointment, he was once again dragged to another place, another time. Now, he was about five, sitting in his cupboard. "Did my parents love me?" he asked himself in a tiny voice.

Another scene- or was it the same? He was older now, but still in his cupboard, still thinking the same things.

Again, and again, the changes became quicker- until, he saw a scene he knew for sure- it was shortly after he had gotten back to the Dursleys', about a month before his trial. And he was thinking the same things once more.

With an odd sense of finality, he was pulled once more from the scene and into blissful darkness, with one last thought echoing in his mind- they had.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

Luna paced her compartment on the train. She had put a complex locking spell on the door, and was relieved to think that she'd be alone for the whole trip. It would give her more time to think.

"Something just doesn't add up," she muttered to herself. She knew that Harry was innocent, but why had he said he was guilty under Veritaserum? Was it just a faulty batch? Had it been sabotaged? Or was it something other than the potion?

She did not know. All she really knew was that if she had thought she had had no friends in the past, she had thought wrong. She doubted Ron, Hermione, Neville, and Ginny would hesitate to spread the information that she thought Harry innocent- in fact, by the time they got to the school, everyone on the train would probably already know.

Flopping into a chair, she resigned herself to another horrible year.

Chapter Three: Awakening

Nimi sat beside the bed of Lord Azkaban. His name was Harry Potter, as they had found out in the records, and he had been accused of murder and sentenced to the prison. That had been a tad hard for her to swallow; why would a man that was her Lord do something like that? Perhaps the Ministry was wrong. Perhaps he was innocent.

Of course, there was always that nasty "perhaps not".

She started as her Lord stirred.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

Harry moaned, blinking open an eye and quickly shutting it. By the gods, it was bright. Wait a minute- bright?

Harry sat up quickly, eyes now fully open despite the brightness. As his eyes adjusted, he caught sight of a girl next to his bed. "So, what, your Master sent you to kidnap me?" he asked sarcastically.

The girl blinked. "What do you mean?"

Harry snorted. "Last thing I knew, I was on my goddamn cell," his voice raised, "because you goddamn bastards framed me! Now, why don't you just go get Moldy-Shorts and we'll have a little talk."

The girl's nose wrinkled. "No one kidnapped you. You're in the Hospital Wing of Azkaban Prison."

Harry raised an eyebrow. "Then who the hell are you?"

She started. "Oh my goodness!" She stood and saluted him. "Captain Nimi Stardreamer, SIR!"

Harry frowned. "Sir? And what the hell am I doing here?"

Nimi started once more. "I'm sorry, I should have realized..."

Harry smiled sarcastically. "Now if you could just answer the questions..."

She blushed. "Right. Sorry. I just really don't know how to say this..." She took a deep breath. "I was on patrol, walking by your cell, when I saw a glowing light. I wasn't sure what to do at first, so I Stunned you and looked to see where the light was coming from. That was when I saw the Rune." Somehow, from the way she said it, Harry could tell it was capitalized. "I suppose that that isn't the best place to start, actually. You see, I called you Sir because you are a Sir to me. You are my Lord Azkaban."

Harry stared at her, and then prodded her mind with his to see if she was lying. She wasn't. "Crap," he muttered. "Another title to add to the bunch."

He could feel the girl fling up her mental shields after he had made sure she wasn't lying. At his quirked eyebrow, she coolly stated, "My business is my own, my Lord."

He grinned. Despite the rather rocky start, this girl was beginning to grow on him. "You were saying?"

"Right. I brought you here, to the Hospital Wing, and then called the Council. They determined that you are, indeed, my Lord Azkaban, all though they aren't quite sure how. They searched the genealogical chart quite thoroughly to try and find any mention of relatives of the last Lord, but found none."

Harry nodded. "That's all well and good, but what is, exactly, the Lord Azkaban?"

Nimi's eyes widened. "I had assumed you would know... All right then, the Isle of Azkaban is an island-"

"No shit Sherlock," Harry said with a smirk.

Nimi rolled her eyes. "Right. Anyways, the Prison is the main reason outsiders come, and not many know of the rest of the Isle. It is rather expansive as Isles go, I suppose; the Prison, although 10,104 square miles, only covers about one-sixteenth of it. the capital city, near the Prison, is that of Kharerre, where most of the population resides.

"The Lord Azkaban's full title is the Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles, which are a small chain of tiny islands once inhabited by Druids. The Lord can be recognized by the Rune of Azkaban, inscribed upon their left palm."

Harry interrupted. "Then why did you need the Council to verify me? And what's the Council?"

"You needed to be verified because the Ministry has almost taken over the Isle. We thought that either you were the Lord, which is the truth, or the Rune was some sort of magical tattoo or plot by the Minister."

Harry could feel his blood boil as Captain Stardreamer began to explain the Ministry's control of the Isle. 'Bloody politicians,' he thought angrily. 'Taking over the lives of a whole colony of citizens just to further their own interests. Of course, sending the only person who can kill Voldemort to prison isn't that smart either...'

He turned his full attention back to the speaker as she began to describe the Council. "You wanted to know about the Council. There is a different one for each Lord, so I suppose you'll have to create your own. There are seven members; a Primary Advisor, two Secondary Advisors, a Prison Warden, a Liaison to both the Ministry and the Azkabanians, and a High War Admiral." Harry could tell from the change in the timbre in her voice that she wanted nothing more than to hold this last position.

"The Primary Advisor basically tells you whatever they think you should do when they ask you about it, and you consult their opinion first. Then the Secondary Advisors; they don't hold quite as much weight. The Prison Warden is in charge of the Prison, security, prisoners, punishments, and that sort of thing. The Liaison basically tells you what's going on with your people and at the British Ministry. And then there's the High War Admiral." Her voice was once more filled with longing.

"The High War Admiral is in charge of your personal safety and helping you plan for battle. They're in charge of training regiments for the troops, protection of the Isle, and that sort of thing. And, I suppose, that's really all there is to the Council." She was changing

the subject; apparently, she didn't feel like talking about High War Admirals anymore. "What I wanted to ask you though- and I probably shouldn't even be asking you- is why you were arrested?"

His face darkened, and she cringed. "I'm sorry my Lord! I didn't mean to offend you-"

He cut her off with a wave of her hand. "No, no, it's not that. Just... memories." He sighed. "Look, I really don't want to tell this story a lot, and I'm going to have to speak with the last Lord's Council, so why don't you call them down here, and I'll say it all once?"

She looked vaguely surprised at his lack of reprieve, but nodded and got up to do so. When she had gone, Harry thought.

It was certainly a bit much to take in, but hey, as long as he was away from the Dementors, he was happy.

So he was a Lord. He idly wondered if that meant he got to kick Fudge's ass around. He certainly hoped so. That man had just about ruined his life. Besides, Fudge was a complete idiot. Maybe if the man had admitted Voldemort was back in the first place, Sirius would still be alive...

He forced his mind away from his late godfather and instead turned his mind to the girl who had rescued him- Nimi Stardreamer, she had said her name was. Captain Nimi Stardreamer. He wondered if she was very good at her job. He supposed so, if she had been promoted to Captain.

He had read the Ministry Laws the past summer- healing a prisoner was against the law. She had risked much by taking him to the Hospital Wing, and he was grateful. He had practiced Occlumency over the summer, not wanting a repeat of the Department of Mystery event, and from what he could read of her, she seemed like a nice person. The kind of person who, perhaps, would actually believe the truth instead of Voldemort's lies...

His train of thought was interrupted, for which he was grateful, when Nimi entered again, this time with seven people in ceremonial robes

behind her. Harry received an immediate impression of intense dislike for the majority.

"My Lord," one man said in a nasally, simpering voice, bowing. Harry impatiently waved for him to stand.

"I asked Captain Stardreamer to bring you here so that I could explain how I ended up in Azkaban once instead of twice. I figured you lot would want to hear; if you don't, leave." No one moved. "Right then. Short version or long version?"

"Long, if you don't mind, my Lord," the man with the nasally voice said.

Harry sighed. "I was walking home from the grocery store. The Dursleys'-my aunt and uncle and cousin- had sent me to buy some noodles for dinner. When I got to the house, the Dark Mark was floating over it." Expressions turned grim, and one woman on the council covered her mouth with her hand. "I ran inside to find my... family still alive and surrounded by Death Eaters.

"I fought, but was overwhelmed and Stunned. When I awoke, I was in a holding cell about five minutes before my trial began. At the trial, I was informed that I had been witnessed killing my relatives. I was administered Veritaserum, and I said things that I never meant to say.

"When I tried to tell them that I was innocent, it came out as guilty. When asked why, instead of saying I didn't do it, I said that I had wanted to kill them, and how glad I was that I had. I was sent here without a second thought, despite my innocence."

The woman who had covered her mouth spoke. "My Lord, if we can do anything to prove your innocence..."

Harry laughed hollowly. "It's not as though anyone would believe you. Besides, I see absolutely no need for it to be known that Harry Potter and the Lord of Azkaban are the same person." He paused, and there was absolute silence for a moment. "I presume I shall need to set up a new Council?" Nods. "Alright, I'll need to speak with the High War Admiral in private then."

Everyone but one of the few people on the Council that had stricken him as likable left. The remaining man bowed. "My Lord, my name is Artur."

Harry nodded. "I am pleased to meet you, Artur. To get straight to the point, I need to find a Council. I was wondering if you had any advice on who would be best as my High War Admiral."

The man didn't look surprised. "Captain Stardreamer, General Azback, and I are really the only people cut out for the job. That's a fact. Another one is that General Azback, while suited, is happier overseeing."

Harry nodded slowly. "You think he would be a good Prison Warden?"

"The best there is."

"I'll talk with him, see if I could get along. So for High War Admiral, that leaves you and Captain Stardreamer."

The man shook his head. "With all due respect my Lord, I'm really not interested in serving again. I wish to retire. Besides, Captain Stardreamer would, in all likelihood, be as good as I."

"Just how good is she? No offense meant, but she is only a Captain."

Artur laughed. "The militia's half and half on that one. Her superiors and others think she's too young, and the rest of them think that she should be promoted more, even if she is only fourteen. She has an inborn talent, my Lord, and of that there's no doubt."

Harry bit his lip, then nodded. "If there's no one better suited to the position, she's hired. She seems like the kind of person I could work with, and I owe her that much for saving me. Please send her in when you leave." The only problem with that was that he had considered making her his Primary Advisor. True, he didn't know her that well, but she seemed very well informed about the Isle, beyond an average citizen, and as though she had the same sorts of ideas that he had.

Artur stood and left, but not without one last comment that made Harry double-check his mental shields- "You know, my Lord, a Primary Advisor can hold other positions. You'd just need an extra Secondary Advisor, or to divide the position of Liaison."

Harry stared at the now closed door and smiled. He liked that man.

b

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror /b

Nimi stood as Master Artur exited. "He wants to see you," he said softly to Nimi before he was surrounded by the rest of the Council, all wanting to know what their Lord had said.

She entered, and shut the door behind her. Lord Azkaban looked up and fixed her with his emerald gaze. "Captain Stardreamer."

She inclined her head. "Yes, my Lord?"

"How would you like to be my High War Admiral and Primary Advisor?"

Nimi stared at him as though he had grown an extra head. "My Lord, what..."

"Artur feels that you, he, and General Azback are the only ones that could be considered for the job, and thinks that General Azback would be better suited to the job."

"Well- why doesn't he serve again?"

"He doesn't want to, and even if I think I can trust him, I can trust you more."

She spluttered. "My Lord, you've only just met me-"

He laughed dryly. "You get a sort of sixth sense on these sort of things when there's a madman out for your blood. Now, do you agree?"

Deciding to bring up the "madman" thing later, she nodded, still in shock. "I would be most honored, my Lord."

He grinned at her. "Good. And another thing- when we're in private, call me Harry."

She smiled back, albeit rather uncertainly. "Alright... Harry."

Harry nodded. "Better. What should I call you?"

She shrugged. "Nimi's fine."

"Alright then, Nimi it is." He sighed. "What do you think, should I split up the Liaison position or have three Secondary Advisors?"

Nimi bit her lip. "I would say split up the Liaison, because too many Advisors with conflicting opinions and you get trouble."

Harry nodded slowly. "Alright. Sounds good. I was wondering- can a non-Azkabanian citizen become a part of the Council?"

Nimi wrinkled her brow. "I don't see why not. Why?"

Harry shrugged. "I dunno. I noticed that one of my friends wasn't at the trial, and if she did think me innocent, she gives good advice, and I was thinking about making her a Secondary Advisor."

Nimi shrugged again. "It sounds fine." She frowned. "Out of curiosity, how old are you?"

"Sixteen. Why?"

"Then you won't want the Ministry finding out your age, because legally they can force minors to go to the Magical School of their choosing."

Harry pulled a face. "Yeah, they'd love that, wouldn't they?"

"Probably." She bit her lip. "We need to think of a cover story."

Harry looked confused. "Huh? What?"

She sighed. "About why Harry Potter disappeared, and why the Lord of Azkaban was gone for so long. On the Harry Potter front, I was thinking that, since you had such a strong reaction to the Dementors, we could say that they overwhelmed you and you died in your sleep. What do you think."

"Sounds good. I can't think of anything better. And for the Lord of Azkaban part, how 'bout my parents died when I was young- that's true enough- and I was raised in an orphanage, where the Council just tracked me down. I'm twenty-two years old, and was home-schooled in magic by the matron of the orphanage. I won't need to give a name besides Lord Azkaban, will I?"

Nimi shook her head. "No, you shouldn't, and that sounds good. Now, you'll probably want some sort of hooded cloak... all-black outfits should fit your image. We'll need some sort of charm on the hood so that it will always shadow your eyes, and only you can take it off and only by your own will... What do you think?"

"Sounds good. Black dragonhide boots and gloves, I think. Good for protection and fits the 'big bad Lord' image."

She nodded. "Right then. Transforme Incantatem!" His medical outfit was changed into that which they had described. He looked at the gloves and boots and grinned.

"Perfect." He stood and stretched. "Right then. I have a question. Just how bad is the whole Ministry take-over thing?"

"You want the whole truth? You can't sneeze without them saying you've broken some law or another."

Harry smirked. "Then I think it's time I paid Fudge a little visit."

Chapter Four: Minister of Fools

Blah: Thoughts

"Perfect." He stood and stretched. "Right then. I have a question. Just how bad is the whole Ministry take-over thing?"

"You want the whole truth? You can't sneeze without them saying you've broken some law or another."

Harry smirked. "Then I think it's time I paid Fudge a little visit."

His new High War Admiral and Primary Advisor grinned evilly at him. "Wonderful."

Harry smirked back at her. "You need an outfit that befits your station, though."

Her expression changed to one of horror. "Oh dear gods, please not the robes! So damn heavy..."

He laughed. "No, I was thinking something more like... This." He waved his wand and performed the spell she had done for him.

She now wore a pair of black pants and a loose charcoal grey sweater that ended mid-thigh. Sitting on her hips was a black belt with all of her weapons and equipment on it, and her wand was in a holster around her wrist that was concealed in her sleeve. A black robe and dragonhide boots and gloves similar to his ended the ensemble, the hood and cloak with the same protections and charms weaved in and only one minor difference; on the back of her robe was a rendering in silver thread of the Rune of Azkaban.

She looked at him through the shadows of her hood and smiled. "Perfect."

He grinned back, showing his teeth. "I couldn't agree more. Now, what's the quickest way to the Ministry?"

Ministry of Magic, London, England

He strode confidently into Fudge's outer office and looked at the secretary as she rose, the same time that bile rose in his throat. Umbridge.

"What can I do for you, sir?" she asked in a nasally tone.

In response, Harry removed his glove and showed her the Rune. "I'll be seeing the Minister now."

She stared at him. "What-"

Without another word he brushed past her, Nimi close behind, and entered the Minister's office without knocking. Both the Minister and the man he had been meeting with stood. Shacklebolt.

Harry leveled a glare at Kingsley, and the man shuddered at its intensity though he couldn't see the giver's eyes. "I will be talking to the Minister now, Mr. Shacklebolt. Alone."

The Minister was bright red. Not unusual. Harry tuned out what was being yelled at him and thought to himself... i How does he survive with a blood pressure that high? /i When the man stopped to take a breath, Harry held out his hand, letting them see the Rune. Both men gasped. "Maybe the gloves were a bad idea," he muttered to Nimi. She smirked.

"You- but- what- how-" the Minister spluttered.

Kingsley, to his credit, merely bowed and said "By your leave, Lord Azkaban," before swooping out of the office just as Umbridge walked in, panting. How she got worn out moving from the desk to the inner office, he'd never know.

"Minister!" she squealed. "It's the Lord!"

Fudge scowled darkly at her. "I can see that, Dolores. Get out." The woman left with a hurt expression on her face. Fudge turned to Harry with an obviously false smile. "My Lord, we've been holding the Isle for your return-"

Harry laughed hollowly. "Holding? Take-over would be a better term. And you will address me as either Lord Azkaban or Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles, Minister Fudge."

"Of course," Fudge said, the false smile never wavering. "Lord Azkaban, we merely noticed a few problems in your Isle's laws-"

Harry lost his temper.

Harry losing his temper was bad, not good.

Many had been known to run for their hidey-holes at Harry's temper, and later suggest anger management.

A glass figurine of Mickey Mouse broke.

"FUDGE!" He roared. "A FEW PROBLEMS IN MY ISLE'S LAWS? MORE LIKE YOU JUST WANTED TO HAVE ANOTHER PIECE OF LAND TO ADD TO YOUR GODDAMN BRITISH MINISTRY!"

"I AM WELL AWARE OF MINISTRY DECREE NUMBER 18492! I KNOW THAT IF YOU OCCUPY A PICE OF LAND FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS, IT BECOMES YOURS IF IT HAS NO LEGAL CLAIM TO IT! AND I KNOW FULL WELL IT HAS BEEN FORTY-NINE YEARS AND EIGHT MONTHS SINCE MY PREDECESSOR'S DEATH!"

"I WILL NOT STAND FOR IT! YOU WILL NEVER HAVE MY ISLE, NOT WHILE I CAN STOP YOU! YOU ARE GOING TO PULL ALL MINISTRY PERSONELL OFF OF AZKABAN, AND YOU'RE GONNA DO IT NOW!"

Fudge glared at him, not fully comprehending the situation he was in. "Are you crazy?"

Harry laughed. "No, I am not. According to paragraph four, section c of the Azkabanian Treaty, your Ministry has no right to occupy Azkaban without the current Lord's approval. I realize you found a loophole with that when there was no Lord, but there sure as hell is now." He started to yell again, suddenly very glad Binns had made them study the Treaty. "AND WHEN HELL FREEZES OVER WILL

BE THE DAY I ALLOW YOU TO KEEP YOUR GODDAMN TROOPS AND ENFORCE YOUR GODDAMN RULES ON MY ISLAND!"

Fudge gulped, looking slightly pallid, but stood his ground. "Lord Azkaban, your Militia isn't trained enough to handle the prison-"

Harry laughed again. "And whose guards was it that managed to allow DEATH EATER PRISONERS to escape last year? Sure as hell not mine!"

The portly man wiped his brow. "Well- now- See here! We've got Harry Potter in there!" The last sentence was said as though it could somehow save his miserable hide. "We need our people to guard-"

"No you don't. Potter's dead."

The man froze as though he had been shot. "What?" he whispered.

"You heard me. The Dementors got to him. he died in his sleep."

The blustering minister was now prepared. "Well, no more than he deserved!"

Harry sensed Nimi's movement and held up a hand to stop her. "Not here," he whispered. She nodded grudgingly, and stepped back to her position guarding Harry's back.

At Fudge's inquiring look, Harry merely said "A prisoner of Azkaban is given temporary citizenship. You just insulted one of my subjects."

Fudge paled even more. "I- well-"

Harry cut him off. "But that is not what I came here to talk about. I came here to get you to remove your troops. Now." The last word was said so coldly that it wouldn't have been surprising if people's breath clouds started to puff.

Fudge took a deep breath. "Now see here-"

Harry reigned in his temper, and somehow managed not to yell. "I don't know if you've met my High War Admiral and Primary Advisor, Nimi. Nimi, would you like to show off your sword?"

She shot Fudge a feral grin and fingered the hilt. "I'd love to."

The Minister chuckled weakly. "No, no, quite all right... Really..."

Harry smiled. "Alright then, I'll expect the troops gone by tomorrow evening. Good day, Minister." He swept out of the room, Nimi following him once more.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Luna Lovegood woke up in the Hospital Wing. Only the twentieth day of term, and she had already been in here over twelve times. For some reason, people seemed to hate her.

She smiled at that thought. There was no "for some reason". People hated her because she believed in Harry. Even the teachers seemed to despise her; they took points from her, gave her endless detentions.

And she couldn't help but wonder...

Did anyone care? Wouldn't someone come to rescue her?

Or did she truly need to rescue herself?

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Lord Voldemort was happy.

That was never a good thing for the side of the light, the thought of which, surprisingly, only made him happier. He chuckled, and it grew into a full-blown laugh.

The idiots. Honestly thinking that their savior had betrayed them. Fools.

And Dumbledore at the head of the lot.

"I FINALLY WIN, OLD MAN!" Tom Riddle yelled to the ceiling. "I finally win."

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

The man drifted through the greyness, walking with no real destination in mind. Was there a destination to be found in this godforsaken place? He did not know. Nor did he care.

He had cared, at first. He had thought of his family, his friends, the ones that had been gone. He had screamed and kicked and yelled, and tried to go back.

But he could not.

Eventually, all thoughts of escaping his fate had fled, and one face had remained in his mind. "I'm so sorry," he whispered to the specter in his mind for the billionth time. "I failed you."

He had sent him a letter- a last letter, a few days before he had entered this grey place. He wondered idly if he had gotten it. He hoped so, but then again, it had been an old owl that he had asked to deliver it, and he didn't know if the owl had made it.

He didn't know a lot of things.

But he wished he did.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Harry looked around his new home with awe. The Lord of Azkaban lived in a spacious castle, and being there somehow felt... right to him. It was as though the very foundation of Castle Azkaban sung under his feet.

"You like it?"

He looked back at Nimi's grinning face, slightly embarrassed. "It's wonderful."

She nodded. "I've never been inside before." There was a moment of silence where they admired the castle before Harry sighed.

"I s'pose I'd better talk to General Azback."

Nimi nodded. "I agree. I'll call him." She flipped open a small stud in her ear, revealing it to have a ear bud and cord. Sticking the bud in her ear, she opened the other stud and pulled out a small pickup. "General Azback, please," she said clearly.

There was some static, and then he could vaguely make out a man's voice. "General? Our Lord wants to see you." There was a pause, an answer, and then more static. Nimi tucked the equipment back into her earrings and turned to Harry. "He's on his way."

Harry shook himself out of his daze. "Oh, alright then."

They sat down in a few comfortable old chairs in the hall to wait and, soon enough, there was a knock at the door. Harry stood up to answer it, but Nimi got there first and swung the door open. A tall man with dark blonde hair and bright blue eyes that seemed to twinkle with unreleased laughter stood there looking rather nervous.

"Um... you Stardreamer?"

She nodded curtly. "Come in."

He entered and stood, looking around for a moment before spotting Harry and bowing deeply. "My Lord," he murmured reverently.

Harry sighed. "Do stand up, General. I called you here because it was suggested to me that you might do well as a Prison Warden. What do you say?"

The man looked to him in shock. "My Lord, I-"

Harry sighed heavily. "If I am to consider you for my Council, you shall call me Harry."

The man paused. "But- it would be improper-"

"I insist."

"Alright then... Harry."

Harry smiled broadly. "Much better. Now, I want to know, are you interested in the position?"

The man nodded. "I've wanted nothing more for my whole life. Well, except for a family, but my wife and kids more than fulfill that, so-" he stopped. "I'm blabbering, aren't I?"

Harry shook his head. "No, not at all." He was getting a good feeling from this man, and decided that he would do a great job as Warden. There was just one question to ask.

He hadn't needed to ask Nimi, because he had gotten a glimpse of her mind when he had checked to see if she was lying and seen, in that brief second, her answer. But he didn't want to pry in the General's mind, and instead decided to just ask.

"What is your opinion on Voldemort?"

The man made a face. "He's a bastard. He goes around killing off anyone who opposes him, and many who don't, with no system or reason, just to instill fear."

Harry grinned broadly. "You're hired."

Chapter Five: Headmaster's Interference

Once the now Prison Warden Azback had been outfitted similarly to Nimi, Harry took on his most difficult challenge yet.

Looking at his mail.

Apparently Fudge had given a press release that there was a new Lord of Azkaban, and there were offers from newspapers and magazines begging for interviews, people vying for citizenship to get away from their governments, and official letters from the Ministries of forty two nations asking for support in their fights against Voldemort and his minions.

And another letter.

This one was red and gold, with a phoenix printed on the cover. Harry got a sinking feeling in his stomach as he took a breath and opened it.

Inside was a small note, nothing lengthy, and Harry felt his blood begin to boil while he read it.

To the Lord of Caer Azkaban:

My name is Albus Dumbledore. You have, in all likelihood, heard of me. I am the head of an organization that fights Voldemort called the Order of the Phoenix.

I am writing you now to inform you that I shall be coming to Azkaban at two-thirty today to speak with you. As I have citizenship, it should not be a problem. I will see you shortly.

Sincerely,

Albus Dumbledore

Order of Merlin, First Class

Supreme Mugwump-

Harry stopped reading to look at the clock. Two fifteen. Damn.

Setting the letter down on his desk, he made sure the hood of his cloak was fastened before storming back out of the Owlery and into the Hall, where Nimi and Azback were waiting.

"What's wrong?" Nimi asked immediately, standing.

Harry scowled. "Apparently, that bastard Dumbledore somehow has citizenship and is showing up here, without my permission, in fifteen minutes."

Nimi's hand immediately went to her earring. "I can-"

He shook his head. "I thank you for the offer, but I knew I would have to face him sometime... I just didn't think it would be this soon."

There was a knock on the door, and a guard poked his head in. "My Lord?" he asked nervously. "There's a man named Dumbledore here to see you..."

"You tricky bastard," Harry muttered under his breath, "Wanted to catch me off guard." Louder, he told the guard, "He may come in."

The man nodded and ducked back out, and a moment later Dumbledore entered. Harry felt himself tense up with rage, and forced himself to relax. It wouldn't be any good for anyone if he hexed the man now.

"My Lord," Dumbledore said politely with an inclination of his head.

Harry raised an eyebrow. "You may call me Lord Azkaban. And you forgot, in your letter, to include the remainder of my title."

"What?" the man asked, puzzled.

"I am Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles," Harry said calmly. "I could take high insult from that." Dumbledore's eyes flashed with worry and he opened his mouth to speak, but Harry beat him to it. "But I won't. I've decided to take high insult from the fact that you did not even bother to ask my permission to come before coming."

"But Lord Azkaban, I am one of your subjects-"

"And my subjects must place a request to speak with me as well. I did not receive your letter when it first arrived, as I was interviewing General Azback, here, who had become my Prison Warden."

Dumbledore swallowed. "I apologize profusely, Lord Azkaban. It was most impolite of me."

"Yes, it was. Now, I have an audience chamber somewhere... Nimi, you've studied the layout, correct?"

Nimi nodded. "Yes. You'll be wanting the Study for this."

Harry smiled. "Thank you. Could you show me?"

She nodded again, and Harry, Dumbledore, and Azback followed her as she set off down the hall. There was silence until they were all seated in the Study, which turned out to be a comfortable place looking much like the Griffindor Common Room.

"Now," Harry said calmly once all were settled, "What was it you wanted to see me about, Mr. Dumbledore?"

Dumbledore's eyes were twinkling. "Well, Azkaban has an extensive militia, and I was hoping that you would consider allying yourself with the Order of the Phoenix."

"No," Harry said simply.

"What?" Dumbledore asked, confused. "Why?"

"Two things," he responded calmly. "Firstly, I will not put my militia under a leader that I cannot trust them with. And the second reason is also the answer to the first reason; I cannot trust you because you put innocents in my prison."

Dumbledore paled. "Sirius Black was a rare case, my Lord. I assure you-"

"I told you to not call me your Lord," Harry said mildly. "I am Lord only to my subjects."

Dumbledore frowned. "But I am-"

Harry shook his head. "No. As of this moment, your citizenship is revoked."

"Why?" he whispered, looking thunderstruck. "I only asked-"

"You only asked me to put my people in danger so that you could uselessly spend their lives in a fight that you cannot win without the correct tactics, you incompetent fool." Harry's voice was cold and icy. "You only asked me to give you more power in a fight that you have already basically surrendered to by locking away your only savior."

"Oh yes," he continued at the look on Dumbledore's face, "I know about the Prophecy. I know much more than you would think, Mr. Dumbledore. Do not underestimate me. You locked an innocent man away in hell, where your savior would later die."

"What?" Dumbledore whispered.

Harry gave a dead sounding laugh. "Yes, he died late last night. From what I understand, the Dementors got to him."

"But..." Dumbledore straightened, no longer looking quite so shocked. "Well, he did betray us, so I suppose there was no real chance anyways."

Harry inclined his head. "If you say so, Mr. Dumbledore."

"You are sure you won't consider my offer? I really think that you must be quite young... Perhaps if you had an adult here..."

Harry stood in a flash. "No, Mr. Dumbledore, I will not consider your 'offer'. You are a fool if you think for one moment that I will. I will fight Voldemort on my own terms, not the terms of an idiot who thinks that he knows everything but really just lives to let people down. If General Azback doesn't mind, he will escort you to the door."

The man nodded, his expression unreadable, and took Dumbledore by the shoulder's leading him out of the room wearing a shell-

shocked expression. When the door had closed, Harry sank back down into his seat with a sigh, his head in his hands.

"I shouldn't have lost my temper," he mumbled.

Nimi shrugged and sat down beside him. "Well, at least you didn't yell at him like you did Fudge; though, personally, I think you were scarier this time."

Harry laughed, looking up at her. "Thanks." He paused. "I had a question. Why is it that you don't treat me as though I'm... well, for lack of a better term, the Lord of Azkaban?"

She bit her lip. "I'm sorry, I-"

He shook his head. "No, that's not it at all. It's nice to have someone treat me like a normal person for once."

She frowned slightly. "What do you mean, for once?"

He scowled. "Voldemort."

At her inquiring look, he elaborated. "You know that fifteen years ago, he stopped the attacks?" She nodded. "What no one here seems to know is why. The why is me. My mother died for me, leaving a protection so deep that when Voldemort shot the Killing Curse at me, it rebounded and hit him instead, leaving me with only this scar." He lifted the fringe of hair and showed her. "He was left a soul, if you could call him that, without a body. I was left an orphan, and the Wizarding World rejoiced and hailed me as their savior." The last word was spat out.

Nimi's eyes were wide. "I never knew..."

Harry shrugged. "Not your fault."

She took a breath before asking another question. "What is the Prophecy?"

Harry's expression turned dark. "I can't tell you. Voldemort would give anything to know, and if he gets his hands on you somehow, you

can't know it. The only thing I can tell you is that the only reason I'm allowed to know is that it involves me."

Looking rather peeved, she nodded. "So he's back then?"

He started. "Huh?"

"Well, you said that Voldemort might get his hands on me. That would only happen if he was alive."

The Lord of Azkaban sighed. "Yes, he is. In my fourth year, I was forced to compete in the Tri-Wizard Tournament. The Cup was a Portkey, and another student, Cedric Diggory, and I took it at the same time." His heart felt heavy thinking about it, but he strived to keep a light tone. "Voldemort had his Death Eater kill Cedric, and I barely escaped with my life, but not before Wormtail, the Death Eater, had a chance to take my blood and use it to bring Voldemort fully back."

Nimi was pale. "Oh my..."

Harry shrugged, feeling rather uncomfortable. "But my time at Hogwarts is another story for another time," he said, trying to lighten the mood.

She leveled him a look that McGonnagall would be envious of. "Don't think that you'll get out of telling me."

He gulped. "Alright then; I'll make sure to tell you later."

She nodded, a small smile playing on her features. "Good."

There was a knock on the door, and Azback poked his head in. "Harry, if it's all right, I'm going to go home now."

Harry nodded. "Feel free. I'll call you if I need you, and once the rest of the Council is gathered." Azback nodded and left.

Nimi stood. "I s'pose I'd better leave to-" She was avoiding his eyes. There was something she wasn't telling him.

"What is it?" he asked.

She turned. "What's what?"

"Something's wrong."

"It's nothing!" she protested. At his look, she sighed. "Well, my aunt doesn't have any room to put me up, so I've been staying at Militia HQ. This is going to sound really stupid, but I was kind of hoping..."

Harry grinned. "You know, it would be much easier for you to advise me on things if you were in the castle,"

Her eyes lit up. "You mean it?"

He nodded. "Yes." He smiled. "Now, which way to the Living Quarters, oh knowledgeable one?"

She laughed. "It's this way."

HeroVillainSaviouConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

The man in the grey mist was sad.

It wasn't an unusual occurrence, but it still bothered him.

He was thinking about the specter again. The boy had been so kind... like a son to him. They could talk about any small thing and have as much fun with it as though it were the Quidditch World Cup. Something, having the boy there had always made things better.

He wondered if the boy missed him. Part of him, the selfish part, hoped that he did, that he had meant as much to the boy as the boy had to him. But the other part, the protective part, prayed that the boy didn't, because he would give anything for the boy to be happy, not to dwell on his arrival in this place.

Another face rose to his mind. He had called her his girl, once. To him she still was. Even all these years after her death, he still loved her, so much.

Which was the other reason he despised the grey place. When he had died, he had wanted to go to the afterlife, to see her again, but instead, the grey place had claimed him it's own, and he had been able to do nothing to stop it.

He still could do nothing to stop it.

He would, in all likelihood, never see the boy or his girl again.

Chapter Six: Interludes of a Looney and a Marauder

Luna paced the Room of Requirement.

It had become her sanctuary this school year. She remembered the secret from the DA, and always remembered to lock the door behind her before sitting on the rock overlooking the lake.

That was what she always turned the room into; the lake in her old home, the one they had had when her Mum was alive. The waters were a shining blue-green, the grass bright and healthy, and her rock as hard and firm as it had always been.

Her rock... that had been where she had gone after her mother had died. Whenever she had felt sad or lonely, she would sit on her rock and just remember. Remember her mother reading her stories, or singing her songs, or playing games with her, or tucking her in, or kissing her goodnight. The good times.

She didn't like to remember the bad. When her father had gotten depressed. When he had been drunk and hit her. When he had tried to commit suicide, and she had walked in to find him in a pool of his own blood. God, it had been a good thing she had studied Healing Charms.

And now she had more things to reflect on.

Why did no one else believe in Harry? She didn't even know him that well, and she could tell he was innocent. Even Ron and Hermione didn't believe her about their once-best-friend.

She had liked Ron once, but never again. She could never care about someone who could so easily believe lies about their friends... their near-adopted family. No, she couldn't.

And there was no one she could talk to about Harry. She could not think of one person who believed him innocent. She knew that if his Godfather was still alive he would have agreed with her, but Sirius Black had fallen behind the Veil in the Ministry of Magic...

She didn't really believe much in the Quibbler. The truth was, she was a bit of a solitary person, and had been since her mother's death. It was so much easier to get people to leave you alone when they thought that you were loony, or something odd like that. She could never keep track of all the names they called her.

Which was why it had been so odd for her to open up to Harry and tell him about her mother. Sure, it hadn't been much, but it had been something, something more than she usually said. And she didn't know why.

Maybe it was because of the similarities between them. Harry had just lost his father figure, and perhaps she had wanted him to know he wasn't alone.

Or maybe it was just... him. She had always thought that he had a sort of charisma, a sort of talent for making people at ease. She didn't think he really realized it, but he had a way with words that could make even the most pigheaded Slytherin stop and listen.

But if there was one reason she knew wasn't why, it was because he was the Boy-Who-Lived. She knew that there were few who fully understood that title, and she was one of them. He was the Boy-Who-Lived only because his parents were the Ones-Who-Died. He had lost so much to save the world, and in thanks, they shipped him off to the Dementors.

She knew though, in her heart of hearts, that he would get out somehow. After all, his Godfather was the only person to ever escape from Azkaban unaided. He would think of something, and when he had escaped, she would help him clear his name.

Clear his name... he shouldn't even have to. He had saved so many people's lives so many times... He had saved her life. Her, Looney Lovegood, the one that everyone hated and no one liked. If he would save her, he would save the world.

And she had no doubt he could. He had rescued the Sorcerer's Stone in his First Year, defeated the basilisk in the Chamber of Secrets in hers, and lived to tell the tale of Voldemort in her third.

Now, in her fifth year, her OWL year, he was persecuted. But she would never believe the lies, the slander those fools wrote about him. They believed in the Minister who had lied about Voldemort's return for a year instead of a boy they had known for five and a half.

She sang under her breath. It was a song that her mother had always sung her. She had sung it over the years whenever she was feeling stressed, or things weren't going well. Now was certainly one of those times.

"Fare thee well

My one true love

I'll be gone for a while

I'm goin' away

But I'll be back

Though I should go ten thousand miles

The earth may crack

And the sea may burn

If I should not return

Fare thee well

My one true love..."

She wiped a stray tear away from the corner of her eye and sighed heavily. Classes would be starting soon. She would have to leave.

She exited the Room of Requirement, somehow feeling more at peace than she had been when she had entered.

Perhaps her inner demons would let her be for a while.

After all, the outer demons were torturing her enough.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Remus was pacing.

He didn't know what to think. At first, after hearing the confession, he had been so sure of Harry's guilt... So angry that it was probably a good thing his throat had been too tight to speak.

But now... Now, he wasn't so sure. What reason would Harry have to betray them? And there was Sirius. He had been innocent when Remus had thought him guilty, and he had never hated himself as much as he had when he had found out the truth...

And Sirius would have socked him one for believing that Harry could do something like that. Mel would have used some sort of hex on him. James and Lily would both have done things so horrible that he shuddered to think of them.

And Ari... Ari would look at him with those wide, blue eyes and tell him how disappointed she was, and he would feel worse than if she had even yelled or screamed at him.

But they were all dead. He was the only one left. And while that was what they would say and do if Harry was innocent, Harry was guilty.

Wasn't he?

Remus bit his lip. He had said under Veritaserum that...

Could Veritaserum be fooled? He didn't know. But he decided, right then and there, to find out, to set his mind at rest. He would find out if there was a chance that Harry was innocent.

Once and for all, he would know the truth.

Walking down the stairs, he entered the Black Library. If there was anything that could trick the Truth Serum, this is where it would be. Grabbing a few books, he settled down at a table and began to read.

Hours later, he stood up without warning, his face pale and his chair crashing to the floor behind him. No...it couldn't be... could it?

Even if it was true, no one would believe him. No one would believe for one moment that a spell had been placed on Harry, a spell that forced him to tell lies under the Truth Serum. He wasn't even sure if he believed it himself.

The Ministry did run spell checks on every person they placed into custody so that they could be sure that they wouldn't harm anyone...

But the book that he had just closed a moment before had said the spell was passive. It lay dormant, almost impossible to find unless you were looking for it, until it reacted with Veritaserum in the blood stream.

He sat down in another chair with a thunk. Harry was innocent. He was positive of it. But no one else would want to listen. Even Ron and Hermione had absolutely no doubts about his guilt. He could tell with his heightened werewolf senses when he looked in their eyes. Everyone who had been at the trial, all of Harry's friends, were sure he was guilty.

Wait.

Everyone who had been at the trial...

He remembered Luna Lovegood. Long blond hair, bright blue eyes. A kind girl, if a bit spacey. She had always struck him as the type to be more comfortable on her own than with others.

She had been at the Department of Mysteries. Harry had told Remus in a letter a few months ago, at the start of the summer, that she was becoming a good friend.

Her father had been at the trial. Remus knew him on sight as Editor of the Quibbler, and Luna hadn't been with him. Now that he thought of it, she hadn't been anywhere in the courtroom that day.

Why? Why wouldn't she go to the trial of one of her friends? He did not know. All he knew was that perhaps, just perhaps, there was someone out there who would believe him.

He knew what he had to do.

The next morning, he would set out for Hogwarts.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

Luna, along with the rest of the school, was at breakfast when he came.

Everyone Fourth Year and above started to whisper as their former professor, Remus Lupin, walked into the Hall and straight to Professor Dumbledore, who stood with a bemused expression on his face. They whispered for a moment before Dumbledore nodded and Lupin turned to the Hall, eyes searching.

They lit, to her surprise, upon her, and he smiled and walked over. "May I please speak with you in private Miss Lovegood?" he asked softly. Still surprised, she inclined her head in a nod and stood to follow him out of the Hall, and, to her surprise, out of the main doors.

"Where are we going, Professor?" she asked, confused.

"Call me Remus," he said absentmindedly. "Just over here..." He led her to a tree by the lake and they sat down.

When he didn't speak, she asked him "What is it?"

He started and looked at her. "I'm sorry, Miss Lovegood, I spaced out for a moment there.." He sighed heavily. "Miss Lovegood, what do you think about Harry's guilt or innocence?"

Luna sighed heavily. Of course that was what he wanted to talk about. "I firmly believe in Harry's innocence, and whatever you say cannot change that."

To her surprise, a grin broke out over her ex-professors face. "I hoped you would say that."

She wrinkled her nose. "What?"

Lupin pulled a book out of his bag and opened it to a marked page. "This spell," he said, "I believed was used on Harry to force him to lie under Veritaserum in the way the caster wished. It wouldn't have been found in the Ministry inspection." She stared at him, uncomprehending, and he sighed. "I think he's innocent too."

She felt her eyes widen of their own accord. "Really?" she whispered.

He nodded. "Yes." He then sighed again. "But, unfortunately, there's nothing we can do about it. Now that the Lord of Azkaban has returned, I'm sure you saw that in the paper, no one is allowed on the Isle that is not a citizen or specially admitted by the Lord, along with prisoners."

Her face fell. "So we can't do anything?"

He shook his head. "Nothing but wait, and know the truth." When she opened her mouth, he held up a hand. "Look, I agree with you fully, but no one else will."

She nodded with a heavy sigh. "All right, Mr. Lupin."

"Call me Remus. If you need anything, if anyone gives you trouble, just owl me, alright?" She nodded. "Okay. I'm sorry, Miss Lovegood, but I have to get back. I'll see you soon."

She nodded and called after his retreating back "It's Luna!"

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

The man in the grey mist sighed and ran a hand through his hair. He still had seen no one. For the millionth time, he wondered where the grey mist was. All he knew was that he was trapped in it. And for the millionth time, he had no clue.

He longed for a wall. Any sort of wall, that didn't make him feel so out in the open. Something to bang his head against would be very nice right now.

She had had freckles. Not very many, but a band across her nose marring the pale skin that never seemed to tan. He had counted them so many times...When ever she got mad at him, he would count her freckles. She had twenty-seven.

It was odd, how he could still remember the small details, even after all the time that had passed. When she raised an eyebrow, her nose would wrinkle. Her laugh was like a tinkling bell. She had calluses on her palms, unlike the smooth ones you would expect from a pureblood. Her brother's name had been Brendan before he had died, and she had dedicated a song to him. When she sang, you could feel all the emotions in the words. No one could sing her songs like she could.

The bottoms of her ears were connected to the side of her head, not separate like his were. Her broom was a Nimbus 1000. Even though she was a Chaser, she could pull off a Wronski Feint even better than James. The red highlights in her hair sparkled in the sun. She hated her middle name, Elysybyth.

She always drank her coffee black. She liked peppermint tea best, with three spoonfuls of sugar and no milk or lemon. She liked raspberry syrup in her hot chocolate, and somehow always seemed to get it on the tip of her upturned nose only to giggle when he licked it off and tell him "Ewe! That's so gross!" She never stopped him though.

God, he missed her so much. He could only think of his bad memories of her in Azkaban, and once he had gotten out, all of the good had overwhelmed him. He had wanted her by his side again...

He idly wondered if they had found her body yet. Voldemort had captured her fifteen years ago when he had fallen through, and they still hadn't found her body then. But there was no chance she was alive. The longest anyone had ever lived as Voldemort's prisoner was a year. She was gone.

And he probably would never see his love again.

Chapter Seven: Chess in His Head

Harry stretched and climbed out of bed. It was nice, to sleep on a bed again, instead of the floor. He grabbed an outfit the same as the one he had worn yesterday (he and Nimi had transfigured a load of them then) and walked into the bathroom adjacent to his room, looking very much forward to a long hot shower.

When he had finished he towed his hair and ran a brush through it, looking at himself in the mirror.

Dumbledore, the stupid bastard, had given Harry permission to use magic over the summer back in July, and Harry had found the Oculus Charm in a book and performed it, perfecting his vision.

Speaking of magic... An unknown fear clenched his heart for a moment before he realized what was wrong. His wand. The Ministry had snapped his wand.

"Damn," he muttered, leaning forward and grasping the counter. Then a thought struck him. He had cast a warming spell on his sheets last night. How...

Something occurred to him. He pointed a finger at his toothbrush and muttered "Wingardium Leviosa." The Rune felt warm for a second, and the toothbrush lifted. Breaking the spell, Harry sat with a thunk.

"Think Harry," he whispered. "Either you can do Wandless Magic, or..." He glanced at the Rune on his hand. It was a magical marking... And the only reason people couldn't do wandless magic was that then they had nothing to focus their magic through... Could he be using the Rune as a focus?

About an hour later, at five AM, he had decided he was. He had tried doing spells without thinking of the word used, only the effects; that had worked. He had tried not even pointing at the object; that had worked too. All he had to do was concentrate for a second, like he was casting a spell with his wand.

There was a knock on the door. He slipped on his cloak and pulled on his hood before calling "Come in!"

The door opened to reveal Nimi standing in much the same outfit as yesterday, with her hood on as well; they had transfigured a load of clothes for her too. "Hello Harry," she said. "I thought that perhaps you'd want to find out about your friend today?" At Harry's confused look, she elaborated. "The one that you said wasn't at your trial and might think you innocent."

Comprehension dawned. "Right! Very well, I s'pose we'll be going to Hogwarts."

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

The Previous Night at Number Twelve, Grimmauld Place

Dumbledore stood in front of the Order. Ron and Hermione had recently joined, so they were there as well. He sighed heavily. "Quiet!" he called out. Almost instantaneously, there was silence.

He was, for a moment, at a loss as of what to say. He didn't think that they were ready to hear that Harry had died. Remus especially. The werewolf was no longer as convinced of Harry's guilt as he had been, and Albus could tell. He decided to just say the rest of what the lord Azkaban had told him.

"Well," he said with another gusty sigh. "The Lord Azkaban has refused my offer and revoked my citizenship."

There was an instant commotion. Everyone but a select few were shouting and yelling; in fact, only Remus Lupin and Severus Snape were still sitting, calmly looking at him. "SILENCE!" he thundered. He had it immediately, and smiled. "That's better."

"Sir, why would the Lord do that?" Hermione called out.

Dumbledore shook his head. "From what I could gather, he knew about Sirius' innocence and thought that I should have known better."

Hermione was outraged. "So he refuses to help the world because we sent one man to Azkaban when he was innocent?"

Dumbledore shook his head. "No. He just absolutely refuses to help the Order. He says that he shall fight Voldemort on his own terms."

"That's crazy!" Ron shouted. "Why would he do that?"

"I do not know, Mr. Weasley," Dumbledore said, shrugging helplessly. "I just do not know."

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

The Next Morning: Just Outside Hogwarts Castle

Harry took a deep breath.

"You ready?" Nimi asked.

He nodded, and with a wave of his hands the once-thought impenetrable doors to Hogwarts opened. He strolled in as though he owned the place, and then opened the door to the Great Hall, Nimi behind him.

Harry stormed into the Great Hall, his cloak billowing behind him but his hood not moving, still shadowing his eyes. As Dumbledore stood, he raised his hand and showed the Rune. "As Lord of Caer Azkaban, I have a right to demand audience with any magical subject of Great Britain, America, and all other nations that signed the Azkabanian Peace Treaty in 1403" he said in a cold voice.

Dumbledore nodded, ignoring the chill going up and down his spine. "I would be happy to give you an audience, Lord Azkaban. Have you reconsidered my offer?"

Harry laughed coldly. "I really do not see why I would wish to speak with you, and I will never reconsider your offer. No, I need to speak to Miss Luna Lovegood."

Ignoring the whisperings and Dumbledore's look of shock, Luna stood and confidently strode over to the Lord Azkaban, her blond hair floating behind her. "I would be honored to have an audience with you, Lord Azkaban."

Harry grinned, and due to his outfit, it looked as though the Grim Reaper was leering at them. "Excellent. Nimi" the girl stepped forward "Please escort Miss Lovegood to the carriage. I shall be along shortly."

She nodded, and smiled at Luna, showing her out of the Hall and to the carriage. Harry turned back to Dumbledore. "She may be returning here- she may not. Either way, it shall be of her own decision." Harry turned to leave when Dumbledore spoke.

"Why are you doing this, Lord Azkaban"

Harry turned, his grin widening. He had been awaiting this question with much anticipation. "Well, as it seems quite possible that she's one of the only wizarding citizen of Great Britain with any sense, I've decided to make her my Secondary Advisor if she'll accept."

Once again ignoring the mutterings of shock, the Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles swept out of the room, chuckling.

He stepped into the carriage, not before calling out to the driver "We'll just be going back to the Castle."

"Right away, m'Lord," came the reply, and soon they were moving again. Once they were all seated in the carriage, Harry faced Luna's questioning gaze.

"I need to ask you a question, Miss Lovegood. Do you believe in Harry Potter's innocence?"

Luna raised her head. "With all due respect lord Azkaban, I do."

Harry laughed softly. "Good I had hoped so." And he pulled back his hood.

There was silence for a moment as Luna stared at him. "Harry? You're-"

He nodded. "I didn't so it."

She hurriedly agreed. "I know. Remus and I- well, just Remus really, but he showed me- found the spell they used."

He looked at her as though she'd grown a third head. "Remus Lupin? But he thinks I-"

Luna shook her head emphatically. "I don't know if he believed it at first, and maybe he did, but now he's positive you're innocent."

A grin broke out over Harry's features. "Perfect! I needed another Secondary Advisor." At Luna's questioning look, Harry's smile widened. "That's right! You weren't in the Hall when I announced it. Luna, will you be one of my Secondary Advisors?"

Luna stared at him. "What?"

"I need two Secondary Advisors for my Council," Harry said as though it were the most important thing in the world. "And I want you to be one of them. I know I can trust you, and you have good advice."

"But-" she stammered, "I'm not a citizen-"

Nimi interrupted. "Harry has the power to make anyone a citizen. You could stay at Hogwarts or the Isle if you wish."

Harry nodded. "Right. The Castle Azkaban has a lot of spare room, and Nimi and I can tutor you with fifth year knowledge. She's taken fifth year and passed her OWLS already, too, haven't you?"

She nodded. "Yep. I passed the OWLS a few months ago."

Luna looked deep in thought, and then nodded. "I would be honored," she said softly. "And I really don't want to go back to Hogwarts."

Harry nodded. "We'll set you up in the Castle as soon as we get there, which'll be in a few moments." he pulled up his hood, and the rest of the ride was passed in companionable silence.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

She looked up at the man taunting her and somehow mustered the strength to spit in his face. "You bastard," she panted out.

The man laughed. "Yes, I am, but I know for a fact you are too."

She sneered, and for a moment looked uncannily like a good-looking version of Snape. Well, they were cousins. "Lucius, rot in hell."

Malfoy laughed again. "I'll see you there, Fillibuster."

She glared. "I hate your guts."

"That's what happens when someone beats you as much as I have."

"Leave her alone," came a weak-sounding voice in the corner. Both parties involved in the argument turned to look at the other woman chained to the wall in the corner. "You've already done enough."

"What, no half-breed here to save you?" Malfoy asked, sneering at the blond.

"He's more of a man than you'll ever be."

Lucius snarled and bitch-slapped the woman. "Don't you be speaking to me that way girl. I have your life in my hands."

"And we all know you won't kill us," the chestnut haired woman replied. "Your half-blood master wants us alive."

"CRUCIO!" Malfoy thundered.

The woman just stared at him, her teeth clenched in pain. Finally he lifted the curse, and she took in several deep breaths with no energy to speak and insult him again.

Lucius smiled broadly. "Don't mess with me, girl." He swept out of the room.

"You alright?" the blond called once Malfoy was gone.

The chestnut haired one nodded. "I will be." There was a pause, and then "He shouldn't have said that. We both know that he isn't a half-breed."

The blond sighed heavily. "I know, but it still hurts, ya know?"

The other woman nodded. "Prob'ly better than anyone."

The two woman sat in their cell in companionable silence.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

The man in the grey mist was playing chess in his head. "E-4", he muttered to himself.

She had taught him the trick. It worked well against Legilimens. They couldn't read your mind with all the numbers and letters running through it. He remembered what she had said then... "I'll be right there with you, playing chess in your head."

He hadn't played chess since then. Since she had died. It always made him think of her. He thought of her all the time anyways, but chess was just too great of a reminder.

They would always play chess when it snowed. Sometimes they played when it rained, but only after they had one out and swing danced in it. Everyone thought they were crazy for that; either that, or that it was incredibly sweet. Every time it rained, without fail, you could look out the windows of Hogwarts and find them.

But when it snowed, they would ask a House Elf to bring them a huge pot of hot chocolate with raspberry syrup and marshmallow and drink it while concentrating on the game. The whole of the tower would gather around and watched them; the game always lasted at least an hour. They each knew how the other thought, and as a result it took a lot of work for one to outsmart the other.

No matter who won, the tower would cheer and everyone would take turns roasting marshmallow over the fire in the Common Room, even the First Years would be helped out by the upperclassmen. Then they

would make s'mores, and either she and him or one of their best friends would end up with a string of marshmallow connecting their lips and everyone would laugh.

But what was the point reflecting on the past? Only one of his friends was still alive, and he would never see him or any of the rest of them ever again. When his last friend died, he would join the others, leaving him here, alone, in the grey mist.

It always came down to that; it was what he had reflected on in Azkaban, when he was in so much pain over the deaths of four people he cared about and the betrayal of another.

He would always be alone.

Explanations:

The “chess in his head” thing...

In KotORII: the Sith Lords, you can unlock a really sweet little moment if the main player character is female and has a high influence with Atton. He'll teach you to “play Pazaak in your head” so that the Sith can't read your mind. And he says to you, and its so cute, “And I'll be right there with you, playing Pazaak.” It's so cute! I just had to steal it!

The “man in the grey mist”...

For everyone who guessed this correctly, yes, it is Sirius. He'll play a rather large part in this story... I'm going to keep referring to him as “the man in the grey mist” for now because it sounds cooler. Lol!

To uNoble: Thank you for the “time of the month” idea!

Chapter Eight: Of Lycans and Lords

Remus stood as the rest of the Order left the room after that night's meeting, discussing the Lord of Azkaban's arrival at Hogwarts and his singling out of Luna Lovegood, the only student who openly believed in Harry Potter.

He walked over to where Dumbledore and Snape were talking and cleared his throat. They looked at him. “What is it?” Snape asked with a sneer.

Remus glanced over his shoulder. Other than the three of them, the room was empty. “I found information on Harry's trial,” he said softly. The two men glanced at each other.

“May I inquire as to what you mean?” Dumbledore asked cautiously.

Remus sighed. “There's a spell- it's passive and almost undetectable until it meets Veritaserum in the bloodstream. Then it forces the one it's affecting to say whatever the caster wanted them to say. The spell completely disappears when the effects of the Veritaserum wear off.”

The other two men stared at him. It was Snape who broke the silence. "Is it that time of the month Lupin?" he asked with a scowl. "Or are you just out of your bloody mind?"

Dumbledore's eyes were sad looking. "I assure you, Remus, there is absolutely no way that Harry is innocent."

Remus glared at them. "Then it is you who are out of your bloody minds," he said, his voice low and dangerous. He spun on his heel and could be heard walking up the stairs to his room.

"Well, it's certainly is a good thing we didn't tell him about Harry."

Snape nodded. He couldn't agree more.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Harry sighed heavily, sitting down at the dinner table with a 'thump'. He and Nimi had shown Luna a room and transfigured some outfits for her that were almost exactly the same as Nimi's, except that she preferred her sweater to fall to just below her waistline instead of halfway down her thighs.

He was so lost in his thoughts that it was no wonder he started when a brown owl landed on his bed. "Hello," he said cautiously, "The Owlery is on the west side of the Castle..." The owl didn't move but to cock its head, drop a letter on Harry's bed, and soar back out the open window.

"What have we here," Harry murmured, picking up the letter and running a quick scan. No spells except one to make sure that he was the only one to read it. His curiosity piqued, he opened the letter, glancing first at the date and surprised to see that the letter had been sent in June. Glancing back down at the letter Harry's breath hitched in his throat. He would know the messy scrawl anywhere.

Sirius.

Hands shaking, he finished unfolding the letter and began to read.

Prongslet-

Hey kiddo! How are you doing? Classes going well? You got a girlfriend? Don't glare like that, I've got a right to ask, don't I? I am your Godfather, and I've never been more proud to be anything in my life.

You are truly an amazing person, Harry. I am so honored to know you. When I was your age, the only thing I was worried about was playing pranks and going on dates with bimbos who couldn't remember their own names if you paid them. Harry, you are so much more than that. I cannot understand how you can face so much and still be so strong, downplay yourself so much. I am so proud of you.

But onto more serious things. Dumbledore mentioned something about you feeling guilty about these Voldemort vision things. Maybe he's right, maybe he's wrong, I don't know. But what I do know, Prongslet, is that it isn't your fault. Voldemort tried to kill you, and you survived. Just because that makes you have a connection to him doesn't mean it's a bad thing.

You could always inform on what he's doing- or you could learn to block them. I heard that Snivellus is teaching you Occlumency- it's a handy thing to have, even if you do have to study from Snape. Harry, you need to understand about him. I agree that he's a slimy, smarmy git. But I will admit that it's partially my fault. Something you need to know: Your father, Remus, the rat, and I apologized to him a few months into our Seventh Year. We did realize what gits we'd been. But he just blew us off, assumed it was some sort of joke. I will tell you that we never pranked him or picked on him again after that, even if the hatred between us was still mutual.

Harry, there are some people in this world that just can't let go of things, but don't blame him for it. He's putting his life on the line to inform us about Voldemort; he has a right to be somewhat of a snarky bastard, even if he does take it way too far. So even if he doesn't teach you anything worthwhile, please, still study Occlumency any way you can and give him a chance. And a good talking to, if the opportunity presents itself.

Take care, Prongslet. I love you so much.

Padfoot

Harry angrily wiped a tear from his eye. God, he missed him so much... "Stupid Veil," he muttered. "Stupid Bellatrix."

"What's in the letter?" came a curious voice from behind him. He turned around to find Nimi looking at him.

"It's from my late godfather," Harry said softly. "He sent it before he died."

Nimi looked embarrassed. "I'm sorry," she said softly. "You don't have to tell me."

He shrugged. "It would be nice to talk about it, I guess. I s'pose the story really starts in my third year, when Sirius Black escaped. He was my godfather." She opened her mouth, and Harry held up a hand. "Before you say anything, he was innocent. Peter Pettigrew framed him. My parents switched to Peter as the Secret Keeper in the last minute because they thought Voldemort would never suspect they would use Peter; It turned out Peter was a Death Eater. He betrayed my parents to Voldemort.

"In the street that day, Sirius had chased down Pettigrew to get revenge. Peter blew up the street with a wand behind his back, made it look like Sirius did it, and transformed into a rat, cutting off his finger so it looked like he blew up in the explosion.

"He stayed as a rat with the Weasleys, and my once-best-friend Ron. We didn't know who he was until Sirius and Remus showed us. It turned out that my dad had been a stag Animagus, Sirius a dog, and Peter a rat. Remus wasn't an Animagus because he was a werewolf.

"Remus transformed that night; it turned out it was a full moon. In the confusion, Peter escaped. Sirius was recaptured, so my other friend, Hermione, and I traveled back in time to rescue the hippogriff, Buckbeak. We then rescued Sirius from Flitwick's office where they had locked him up and helped him escape on Buckbeak.

"I already told you about my fourth year, with the Tournament and Voldemort's return. In my fifth year, I ended up having shared visions

of what Voldemort was doing through my scar. He found out and sent me a fake vision of him torturing Sirius in the Department of Mysteries. Luna, Ginny, Neville, Ron, Hermione, and I went to rescue him only to find out it was a trick.

“We held our own for a bit, and then the Order came. Sirius was with them. He dueled with his cousin, Bellatrix Lestrange. She Stunned him, and he fell into the Veil.”

Nimi bit her lip. “I’m so sorry, Harry.” He shrugged, not wanting to talk about it anymore. There wasn’t exactly anything either of them could do.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Remus was pacing his room angrily. They didn’t believe him. They didn’t bloody believe him. Well, that was fine with him. Summoning his suitcase to him, he performed a quick packing charm and, in a moments time, was ready to go.

He walked down the stairs, not caring if anyone saw. Which someone did. “Remus, where are you going?” Hermione asked him.

“I’m leaving,” he growled. “Tell Dumbledore that I have officially quit the Order of the Phoenix and if I ever hear from him again it will be too soon.”

And leaving Hermione staring at him he walked out the front door of Grimmauld Place and passed the wards before Apparating to an alley near obscure Muggle Hotel tin London that he had stayed at before, knowing that no one would be finding him anytime soon.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueor

A blond man walked down a set of stairs and stopped in front of a set of bars. There were two women chained to the wall inside; one looked up and glared.

“Hi Lucy!” she said sarcastically. “Just PEACHY to see you, thanks for asking!”

Malfoy leveled a glare at her. “Don’t call me Lucy,” he growled. “You stupid bitch.”

“Takes one to know one!” the blond woman called out.

The chestnut-haired one sniggered as Malfoy turned an interesting shade of purple. “CRUCIO!” Malfoy screeched, pointing his wand at the blond. She did the same as the chestnut haired one had the day before, clenching her teeth, glaring, and refusing to scream, panting when the curse was finally taken off.

“I’ll kill you someday, Malfoy,” the chestnut haired one hissed. “I really will. As soon as I get out of here, I’ll get you so bad... first, I’ll chop of your buddies, and then I’ll break all your limbs, and then I’ll rip out your teeth and your tongue, and-”

Malfoy laughed, though it seemed to be to cover up some nervousness. “No, I’ll kill you, and you can join your daughter and husband in HELL!”

The woman paled. “What?” she whispered. “He-“

Malfoy chuckled. “Oh yes, he was taken care of. Your godson was heartbroken, I hear. Was crying for his widdle godfather.”

Still pale, but her temper returning, a tear fell down her cheek. “You BASTARD!”

Malfoy just laughed and left.

“Oh my god,” the one with the chestnut hair whispered, his eyes wide. “He’s gone.” Her primal scream rang through the room, and was heard throughout the Malfoy Manor.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

The man in the grey mist paced.

He was thinking about the boy this time. The way he would look at him with those trusting green eyes, the way he had stopped him from killing Peter... He was so noble, just like his father. People told him that he was just like his father because they looked alike; he was one of the few who saw beyond that, that the boy was like his father in far more than looks.

Both the boy and his father were chivalrous, caring, kind... the epitome of Gruffindor. Sure, his father had been cruel to one person... But few knew how that started. And it certainly wasn't with the father. And the boy had his rivalry with the Malfoy lad- father and son were alike in so many ways.

He had two best friends, much like his father. The father had had three, but after the betrayal... he hadn't liked to think of the Rat that way. He still didn't. The stupid bastard...

It was because of him that the boy had no parents. It was all the fault of the Traitorous Rat. He had fallen too far to ever be redeemed.

He would join his hypocrite half-blood Master rotting in hell.

Chapter Nine: Of Lycans and Lords

Harry groaned as the sun invaded his room. "Five more minutes, Ron," he mumbled, before his eyes flew open and he remembered where he was. "Gotta remember to close those bloody curtains," he muttered.

With a heavy sigh, he rolled out of bed and walked to his dresser, grabbing his clothes before walking to the bathroom. It was quickly becoming a routine.

When he stepped back out of the bathroom, fully dressed and ready to go, he was only mildly surprised to see Nimi there. "Is Luna coming?" she asked.

Harry nodded. "Even with me being Lord of Azkaban, knowing Remus he wouldn't come. He knows Luna."

Nimi wrinkled her nose. "Well, he knows you, doesn't he?"

"He knows Harry Potter," Harry corrected. "Not the Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles. And I don't want to risk someone else finding out that they're the same person."

Nimi nodded and looked to the clipboard in her hands. "Our spies have tracked him to a Muggle Hotel- it's called The Grand and its in London."

Harry nodded. "Sounds good. Let's get Luna, and we're ready to go."

Nimi nodded, and they set off down the hallway to Luna's room. They met her halfway; she was already dressed. "Let's go," she said, her voice without the dreamlike quality it had used to hold.

Harry nodded solemnly, producing a Portkey from his pocket. Nimi tapped it with her wand, muttered "Portus," and, in a minute, they were off.

Imagine how surprised they were to find Remus' room empty with none of his things in sight.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Remus snapped at the man gripping his arm. "Let go of me, you great oaf!" His break into Azkaban hadn't worked as well as he had hoped. Apparently, they had set up advanced wards since Sirius had escaped, and his description of Azkaban hadn't been much use.

In short, Remus hadn't set a foot into the prison before he had been grabbed by some guards and hauled off towards Castle Azkaban. From what he could tell, they were almost there.

And they were. In less than a minute of intense struggling on Remus' part, they were in front of a large set of double doors. One of the guards knocked, and a rather annoyed looking girl with her hood pulled over her eyes and shadowing the upper half of her face opened it. "What?" she snapped. "Our Lord is rather angry at the moment."

The guard nodded respectfully. "I apologize, High Admiral Primary Advisor Stardreamer." Remus raised an eyebrow. Quite a mouthful for such a young girl. "Could you please just tell him that we caught this man trying to break into the prison? He could just discuss the matter in his Throne Room..."

The girl nodded with a heavy sigh. "I'll help him find his way. He still doesn't know the layout very well."

The guard nodded. "We'll come in in five minutes, ma'am."

The girl nodded, and, leaving the door opened, swept through the halls towards where, presumably, the Lord of Azkaban waited.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorheroV illainSaviourConqueror

"Harry!" she called out. "The guards have intercepted someone trying to break into the prison."

There was a sound of something that sounded expensive and breakable hitting the door. "I'm coming," came a growl from behind

the door, and a moment later Harry came out. He silently followed her to the Throne Room and glared at the chair in the front of the room. "Can't I sit on something *comfortable*?" he whined.

Nimi scowled at him. "No. That's the Lord Azkaban's throne; you'll sit in it, or I'll curse off your buttocks."

Harry scowled back at her and reluctantly sat on the chair. Nimi took a place by his side, shortly behind him. In a moment the door opened and guards came in, dragging a man that looked oddly familiar to Harry. When the man lifted his head he was sure. "*Remus*?"

The man looked up at him. "Lord Azkaban. I am amazed you know my name."

A smile flitted across his features, and he addressed the guards. "I know why he tried to break into the prison. I thank you for bringing him here. I need to speak with him; would you mind?"

The guards shook their heads and left, and soon it was just Harry, Nimi, and Remus in the room. When Harry was sure no one else was there, he turned back to Remus. "Hello," he said calmly. "We were looking for you earlier; we didn't think you'd come here."

Remus looked confused. "With all due respect, what are you talking about?"

Harry laughed and pulled back his hood, his emerald eyes shining. "Good to see you, Moony."

Remus stared at the boy on the throne. "Harry?" he whispered breathlessly. He ran forward and enveloped the boy in a hug. "Oh Harry, I'm so sorry, I should have known right away--"

Harry waved a hand. "It's alright Remus, really. You didn't do anything to hurt me." He paused. "Although there was something I was wondering if you would do for me."

"Anything, Harry."

"Would you be one of my Secondary Advisors?"

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

Luna was pacing her room when a young man poked his head in. He immediately blushed and stammered an apology, turning to leave. "Wait!" Luna called, confused. "Who are you?"

"My name is Nikolai Nadreski," he said nervously. "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to bother you. I was looking for the Throne Room; I was told to talk to the Lord of Azkaban."

"Why?"

He gulped. "I- I can't really..."

She smiled. "It's alright, I understand. I overheard his Primary Advisor talking to him about ten minutes ago; he's in an audience."

The boy's face fell. "Oh," he muttered.

Luna smiled at him. "You can stay here, if you'd like. I'm sure Lord Azkaban wouldn't mind."

"Oh, no! I wouldn't want to intrude-"

She shook her head. "Not at all. I... don't have very many friends anymore... I'm open to making some more."

He smiled uncertainly. "Oh- alright then."

She smiled at him, and motioned him to a chair. Perhaps she wouldn't be left with only three friends after all.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

Dumbledore paced his office. Not only had Luna Lovegood not yet come back, but Remus Lupin was missing, and according to Hermione Granger, had quit the Order.

How to get him to sign back up? Having a werewolf was good for his cause. He *needed* Remus in the group. They didn't really have anyone of another species, though Hagrid was a half-and-half.

Remus would come back eventually. The Wolfsbane Potion was hard to brew, and *very* expensive to buy. The werewolf would never be able to afford it. Dumbledore had made sure of that, giving tips to all of his previous bosses about him so that he would be fired and would eventually agree to work with Dumbledore.

Besides, the werewolf had a soft spot for Harry Potter. Perhaps, Albus mused, he could claim to believe in Harry's innocence when he next spoke with Remus? Yes, and then, perhaps a week afterwards, tell him he had just found out of the boy's untimely death... That would work. The werewolf would rejoin them.

He would have to.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

"Are you all right?" the blond asked.

The chestnut haired one snorted. "Yeah right." Her voice raised to a high shriek. "I just found out that MY HUSBAND'S DEAD!"

The blond winced. "Lucy was probably lying, just to hurt you."

The other woman let out a breath and shook her head. "No. He was totally convinced with what he was saying." She smiled sadly through the darkness. "Maybe he's wrong."

The blond nodded. "I can't see him just off and dying and leaving you like that."

The chestnut haired one let out a bitter laugh. "Well, he wouldn't exactly have much of a choice in the matter, would he?"

The blond shook her head vehemently. "Honestly Melly, you know that he would have fought tooth and nail to come back to you."

'Melly' chuckled. "And its not like your wolfman wouldn't have done the same for you!"

The blond shook her head sadly. "If they hadn't fooled him into thinking I was dead, he would have."

'Melly' sighed heavily. "I forgot about that. I'm sorry, Ari."

'Ari' shrugged. "It's alright. I know he loved me, and that the fool probably still does. He should just get on with his life if he hasn't. I don't want him moping around."

The other woman sighed again. "Most of me feels the same way... but there's this small, jealous part that hopes he's miserable over me."

'Ari' nodded. "Same here." There was silence for a moment before 'Melly' began to sing in the clear, dulcet tones of a soprano with a bit of a lilt to it.

"Warning sign

I lived the good life, and it passed me by

Then I started looking, and the bubble burst

I started looking at excuses."

'Ari,', understanding exactly how 'Melly' was feeling, joined in a harmony with a beautiful alto voice.

"Come on in

I've got to tell you 'bout the state I'm in

I've got to tell you, in my loudest tones

How I started looking for a warning sign.

"When the truth is

That I miss you

And the truth is

That I miss you so.

“Warning sign

Came back to haunt me, and I realized

That you were my true love, and I let you go

You were my true love, I didn’t let you know.

“Come on in

I’ve got to tell you- what a state I’m in

I’ve got to tell you, in my loudest tones

How I started looking- for a warning sign.

“When the truth is

That I miss you

And the truth is

That I miss you so

And I’m tired, oh-oh-oh

I should not have le-et, you go-

Oh.”

The last note faded into silence as the two women thought of the loved ones they had left behind.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

The man in the grey mist stared into the abyss of nothingness that surrounded him. He had thought he had heard her singing.

It had been the song that Ari had written back in their sixth year, when she had found out what his friend was. She had sang it to him. She had *forgiven* him. She had still loved him. His friend had been amazed.

But he must have been imagining things. He just wanted to hear her voice so badly, he had thought he had. But he hadn't. He couldn't have.

It was just a dream.

Chapter Ten: Cure

Remus tugged at his cloak, and Harry laughed. "Geez Moony, it's just a cloak!"

Remus looked up with wide eyes. "Well, yeah, but it's a really, really nice cloak. You shouldn't have..."

Harry waved it aside. "For one thing, I Transfigured it, and for another, even if I had bought it, it would have been worth it."

Remus smiled gently at him. "Thank you, Harry."

"Don't mention it." He screwed his face up in thought. "Nimi, you said the Castle had an expansive library, right?" The girl nodded. "Could we go check that out today? There was something I wanted to look up."

Nimi shrugged. "Sure, why not? You want Luna to come too?"

Remus started. "Luna's here?"

"Yes. She's my other Secondary Advisor." He turned back to Nimi. "Sounds good. Let's stop by her room on the way."

Harry, to his surprise, managed to lead the way to Luna's room without any guidance. Even more surprising was the sound of voices through the open door. Knocking on the frame, he looked inside to find Luna conversing with a boy that looked to be about Harry's age.

The boy immediately stood and bowed low. "My Lord," he said in a shaky voice, "I- I n-needed to ask you- the guards said it was alright-"

Harry nodded. "Alright. What's wrong?"

The boy, seemingly gaining courage, said "My name is Nikolai Nadeski. My father, he serves the Town Council of Kharerre- he asked me to relay a message."

Harry inclined his head. "May I inquire as to what the message was?"

“Of course, my Lord. He asked me to tell you that- that- he asked me to tell you that he thinks we should side with Voldemort in this coming war.”

The boy winced, as if expecting a blow, and all in the room, including Luna, looked surprised. All, that is, except Harry. “Do you agree with your father?” he calmly asked.

The boy hesitated, then shook his head. “But please don’t tell him!” he cried out. “He- he would beat me, and-“

Harry shook his head. “Don’t worry, I shall not.” He paused, an idea occurring. “You said he served on the Town Council?” Nod. “So, people listen to him?” Nod. “Do people listen to you?” Hesitant nod. A broad grin broke out on Harry’s face. “Then I have the perfect solution.”

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

The two women were lead out into the blinding sunlight. Both moved to cover their eyes but were stopped by the Death Eaters holding their arms in place.

“Remember, you are to be silent,” Lucius hissed, “Or I will silence you.” The two women nodded grudgingly.

‘Melly’ looked around, tears in her eyes. The gardens were filled with roses. He had always brought her roses. Whenever she was feeling down, he would give her a rose, any color but yellow. She noticed that once, and asked him. He told her that yellow roses were the symbol of friendship, and what they had far surpassed that.

‘Ari’ watched her remaiing best friend cry and felt tears prickle her own eyes. At least the one ‘Ari’ loved was still alive, even if he thought her dead.

After a few more moments in the glorious outdoors, they were roughly dragged inside and chained back up. “Melly?” ‘Ari’ whispered once the guards had left. “Melly, are you okay?”

'Melly' sniffled. "I'll be alright eventually, Ari. I just need to think."

The other woman nodded and left her friend to her thoughts, wondering idly how her goddaughter and other best friend's son were doing.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSAviourConqueror

The Lord of Caer Azkaan and the Druid Isles' new Liason to the Azkabanians nervously knocked on the door to his father's council chambers with his hood pulled up. "Nikolai?" his father growled, standing up. "What took you so long? What did the Lord say? And where did you get those robes?"

Feeling a burst of courage, Nikolai Nadreski stood tall. "Our Lord Azkaban has denied your request," he said calmly, "Taken away your position on the Council, and only did not remove your Citizenship because I asked him. He has done nothing to the others on this Council, as they only went along with you because you bribed and threatened them. You will be attending a trial for disruption of public affairs, bribery of public officials, and child abuse on the fifteenth of November."

His father stood with a snarl. "What did you tell him, boy?" he yelled, standing.

"Whatever I felt I needed to tell him," Nikolai said sweetly. "As Liason to the Azkabanians, I respectfully request that you leave these chambers now and inform you that I will be staying with you no longer. My new place of residence is the Castle Azkaban."

His father had paled more and more as his son spoke, and was soon shaking. "My- my son-can't we- I'm sure, that with a position like yours, you can put in a good word-"

Nikolai smirked. "I could, but I won't. You have three days to remove your things from the council chambers."

He walked outside into the rain, his cloak swirling, and stepped inside a carriage to return to the Castle Azkaban, ignoring his fathers plaintive cries from behind him. As the carriage left, he smiled broadly.

He hadn't felt this good in years.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Harry was browsing through the Library randomly when he finally found the book he was looking for. "Maxime Moste Potente Potions" was possibly the most sought after book in the Wizarding World; there had originally been seven copies in circulation, but four had since been destroyed and the other three missing. Harry knew that if anywhere had it, it would be the Library of the Castle Azkaban.

Hurriedly shrinking the book and placing it in his pocket so no one would see, he grabbed the copy of plain old "Moste Potente Potions" that was on the shelf and walked to where he could see Nimi and Remus talking with a grin on his face.

"You find what you were looking for?" Remus asked him.

Harry nodded and displayed the copy of "Moste Potente Potions". "I wanted to look through some theory on a few potions," he explained. "I'm going to head back to my room; I'll be out for dinner." At their nods, he did so.

Casting a few powerful locking charms on his door, along with charms so that no one could see or hear what he was doing, he pulled out "Maxime Moste Potente Potions" and resized it, holding it reverently. "Now, let's see here," he muttered, gently opening the book and flipping to the Index. In a moment, he had found the five potions he was looking for, five that had been lost for over five hundred years- the Silver Remedy potion, the Permanent Sticking potion, the Anti-Transformi potion, the Reversus potion, and the Anti-Viral potion.

Looking through their ingredients, he saw that they were indeed compatible with each other and began to brew. Fortunately, none of them took over an hour, and after five hours and forty seven minutes

he was sitting in front of six cauldrons containing the potions, along with the Wolfsbane potion that he had looked up in the regular “Moste Potente Potions”.

Carefully transforming a new cauldron, Harry thought once more on what he was doing to make sure he had it right. The Silver Remedy potion would get rid of the allergy temporarily, the Anti-Transformi potion would stop the monthly transformation temporarily, the Reversus potion would return the wolf to its original state, the Wolfsbane potion would allow the wolf to keep its mind, the Anti-Viral potion would temporarily be able to flush out the disease with the help of the others, and the Permanent Sticking potion would make it all, well, permanent.

He couldn't think of any reason it wouldn't work, and, very carefully, he began to mix the potions together in the final cauldron, aware all the while that he might very well be changing the Wizarding World as he knew it.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Remus felt horrible. The full moon was in three days, and though he would never admit it, he couldn't afford the Wolfsbane potion, nor did he know how to brew it. The thought of asking Harry had fleetingly crossed his mind, but he had beaten it down as soon as it had popped up.

He wasn't the type to accept charity, nor to ask for it. He would just ask Harry to put some strong charms on his room on the night of the full moon so that he wouldn't hurt anyone. Hopefully Harry would forget that the moon was approaching and not try to get Wolfsbane potion, for Remus knew that if he remembered he would.

Harry was that sort of person, the kind that could hand out unconditional love like candy. He reminded him of his Arianrhod, the way that she had forgiven him for not telling her the truth at first and surpassed his greatest expectations of her, still loving him even when his inner darkness had been revealed.

Harry was the same. He had stuck by Remus even once he found out that Remus was a werewolf, and he considered the boy a nephew. He loved him as much as a son, a son that he had never had the chance to have since Arianrhod died at twenty. He missed her so much, every moment of every day. He didn't know how he went on without her.

No, scratch that, he did. For years, since Lily and James and Meliara had died and Sirius had gone to Azkaban and Peter betrayed them, Harry had been his reason for living. If he weren't a werewolf, he would have taken the boy in right away. As it was, the Ministry refused to allow him custody.

And now Harry no longer really needed a guardian. He was grown up, a young man. In about nine months, he would be a legal adult, and maybe he wouldn't need Remus anymore.

He shoved his depressing thoughts aside. For now, he would concentrate on the full moon.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

Another two hours later, Harry sat back, tired but elated. He had done it. The potions had bonded together perfectly, and unless he was horribly wrong, it would work.

Unless he was horribly wrong, Harry James Potter had just discovered the cure to lycanthropy.

With a huge grin on his face, Harry ran down the hall to Remus' room. "Remus!" he shouted, pounding on the door, which was immediately opened.

"Harry, is something wrong?" the worried werewolf asked.

Harry shook his head with a huge grin. "Remus, I think I've done it."

He looked incredibly confused. "Done what, Harry?"

The smile on Harry's face grew, if that was even possible. "I think I've discovered the cure."

Harry would have paid a million galleons to have a camera at that moment. Remus' face went rapidly through the stages of shock, disbelief, amazement, and hope into a mix of all of them. "What?" he whispered.

"I didn't show you the real book I found because I didn't want to get your hopes up. I found a copy of 'Maxime Moste Potente Potions', Remus, and I mixed a few of the potions and the Wolfsbane potion, and I really, really think it will work."

Remus stared at them. "A... a cure?" he said hoarsely.

Harry nodded. "It's your decision about whether or not you want to test it though, Remus. I don't know if it will work or not, and I'd be happy to give it to the Lycanthropy Relief Society and have them test it first."

Remus hesitated, and then grinned. "Sirius and James would ask me where my sense of adventure was. I'll do it, Prongslet."

"You sure?"

"Yes."

"Then it's back in my room." They walked back to Harry's room in silence, and when they got there Harry gave Remus the goblet of potion he'd prepared. Remus looked at him with trusting eyes and, in one motion, downed the potion.

What happened next would stay in Harry's memories forever. Remus doubled over in pain, and glowed with a golden light. He arched his back and let out a howl, and something silver flew out of his mouth. The glowing stopped, and Remus collapsed onto the floor.

Harry hurried over and flipped Remus onto his back, checking that he was breathing and had a pulse. He let out a sigh of relief when he realized the man did. Concentrating on the man before him, Harry

pictured him waking, and in a moment he did, sitting up and rubbing his head. "Ow. Harry-" There was hope in his voice. "Did it work?"

"Only one way to find out," Harry said nervously. "Revealus Lycanthropy."

Remus glowed gold for another brief second, and then the mist surrounding him turned red.

Harry let out a yelp of joy. "Yes!" he shouted.

Remus was staring at his glowing red arm in shock as the spell faded. "I'm cured," he muttered. "I'm cured."

Remus J. Lupin was a werewolf no longer.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

The man in the grey mist slept, and the man in the grey mist dreamed.

In his dreams, he was back at Hogwarts with his friends, laughing and holding his girl's hand. But the dreams quickly turned to nightmares.

He was running, and yelling, but no one could hear him. Red eyes followed him everywhere, and he could hear his friends cursing him and his girl crying out to him in pain. Every fear he'd ever known, every horror he'd ever experienced, all were in his nightmares.

He dreaded what his inner clock knew as night, for there was no day or night here in the grey mist. When he slept, he was haunted by the inner demons of his very soul. He longed for escape.

Dead or alive, why could he not just be gone?

Chapter Eleven: The Heir of the Six Approaches

Cure for Lycanthropy Found!

by Rita Skeeter

In a stunning breakthrough yesterday, the unnamed Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles discovered a cure for the disease that has been plaguing both Great Britain and the world for hundreds of years.

The Lord of Azkaban was unavailable for comment, but his high War Admiral and Primary Advisor Nimi Stardreamer held a press conference yesterday by the request of Lord Azkaban. "My Lord Azkaban wishes the public to know that he does not feel fully responsible for this breakthrough," Stardreamer said. "If not for the fact that one of his greatest friends was formerly afflicted by lycanthropy and that he had access to extensive materials from the Castle Azkaban library, he feels that he could never have accomplished this."

Sources say that the Lord Azkaban's formerly lycanthropic friend is no other than the once Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry turned Secondary Advisor, Remus Lupin.

Not only has the Lord of Azkaban come up with this spectacular cure, he has made an offer to all werewolves and former werewolves. "My Lord Azkaban wishes me to relay that any and all werewolves and former werewolves will be booked free passage to Azkaban Isle, where my Lord will administer the cure and provide shelter to them and the families of all the lycanthropes and former lycanthropes who need it," Stardreamer said. "This cure will not be for sale on the general market; Lord Azkaban does not wish, in his words, to 'rip off' any of the hardworking men and women cursed with this horrible disease in such a way that they cannot afford to have it cured. All treatment is free."

It would seem that Lord Azkaban is, indeed, a generous person. He has also funded a Lycanthrope Consul and Relief Society where werewolves and those affected in the past can meet and discuss their

experiences and try to get over the past. Additionally, any employer found to be discriminating against former lycanthropes will be brought to trial by the Lord Azkaban himself.

The Lord Azkaban has been awarded the Hufflepuff Peace Award First Class, the Ravenclaw Discoveries Award First Class, and the Order of Merlin First Class, apparently against his will. Stardreamer reported: "My Lord Azkaban does not wish recognition for his deeds, for he says that to help people has already given him the greatest joy he can bring."

The Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles currently resides at Castle Azkaban on Azkaban Isle.

***Background of the Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles;
Page E4***

More on the cure; Page D7

More on contacting the Lord Azkaban for transport: H3

Harry put down the paper with a scowl. "They *still* gave me the goddamn awards!"

"Well, you can't really blame them Harry," Nimi said diplomatically. "You did just discover the cure to a horrible, before thought incurable disease."

Harry scowled at her. "Well... well..."

Remus laughed, and then turned serious. "I wanted to thank you again, Harry."

Harry opened his mouth to deny that he had truly done anything, but from the look in Remus' eyes, Harry could see he would take insult from that. So all he said was "You're welcome, Remus."

The aforementioned smiled broadly. "I wonder-" his smile faltered.

"You wonder what?" Harry asked, confused.

"I wonder what Arianrhod would have thought."

"Arianrhod?" Harry scanned his mind, but he couldn't remember any Arianrhod. And then he remembered his dream. "Wait... does she have blond hair and blue eyes?"

Remus' head snapped up. "Yes- yes, she did. How-"

Harry shrugged. "I had... well, I s'pose it was a flashback, when the Dementors affected me really bad. You were there, and my Mum and Dad, and- and, Sirius... and you were playing Quidditch with a woman with brown hair and my mum was holding me, and then she handed me to a woman with blond hair and blue eyes... And then my dad caught the Snitch, and he said that that was him kicking my godmother's ass... and Sirius said she was an amazing chaser... and the blond called you Remmy, and the woman Melly..."

Remus smiled softly. "I remember that. Yeah, that was Ari. She was my wife."

Harry froze. "You have a wife?"

"Had," he corrected softly. "She was captured by Death Eaters about two months before... Godric's Hollow... and then they found her body..."

Harry rested his hand on his Secondary Advisor's arm. "I'm sorry, Remus."

Remus sighed, but smiled. "It's alright. It's been years; I've accepted it. I was just going to say that I wondered what she would have thought about me being cured. You know, when she found out I was a werewolf, I thought she would break up with me, and I avoided her for about a month, and then she and Mel and Lily and James, they were the original Weird Sisters you know, they played at the Christmas Ball... and they had people guard the doors so Sirius and I couldn't run out, because Mel was avoiding Sirius because she had found out he was an animagus... and she sang 'Warning Sign', I don't know if you've heard it, but she did it beautifully... she forgave me."

The Lord Azkaban smiled. "That's wonderful, Remus. I'm sure she would have been happy for you."

Remus smiled. "I know she would have."

"But what happened to Mel? My dad said she was my godmother?"

Remus nodded sadly. "Yes. She was captured a few days after Ari. They never found her, dead or alive."

Harry sighed. "Figures. I guess I'm kind of glad, in an odd way." Seeing how confused Remus was, he elaborated. "That means that someone didn't intentionally leave me with the *Dursley's*." The last word was spat out as though he would rather never say it again.

It was Remus' turn to be sympathetic. "Were they that horrible?"

Harry raised an eyebrow. "You remember what Nikolai said his father did?" Remus nodded, and felt his heart begin to sink. "About eight times worse than that." Seeing that Remus was quickly becoming angry, he hurried on. "But then I got my letter, and they were scared of me, so I was fine then. Really."

Remus scowled. "You ought to go to court, Harry."

Harry shrugged. "I never have to go back there again, so it doesn't really matter, does it? They can't get to me any more, Remus. I'm free."

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourconqueror

Nikolai Nadreski was talking to Luna Lovegood.

"So, you're fifteen, right?"

Luna nodded. "Yes, and you're a year older, Harry's age." Luna covered her mouth, as though she had said something horrible.

Nikolai stared at her. "The Lord Azkaban? But he's twenty-two-"

Luna shook her head. "No. He was falsely accused and there was a spell put on him so he told untruths under Veritaserum. He was sent to the Priors, but he was innocent, and Nimi found out he was the Lord when she saw the Rune. He has to pretend that he's of age, or else they could make him go to a wizarding school, which he really doesn't want to do. Nimi has a copy of the sixth year curriculum that they're going to use- I suppose you can too, and they're going to teach me fifth year stuff."

He realized his mouth was open and shut it. "So even though he's innocent, they locked him in Azkaban?"

"Yes."

Nikolai shook his head in awe. "Wow. Those fools at the Ministry really *are* sublimely thick."

Luna laughed, and he thought it sounded melodious. "I have a question, Nikolai. Why are you so nervous around Harry? You only agreed to call him by his name in private because he insisted, and you're always stammering and the like."

Nikolai shrugged. "I guess... I'm sort of in awe of him, really. I mean, he's liberated us from the Ministry after all these years, and he just... exudes power, I s'pose."

She smiled. "He does, doesn't he? But what you need to remember is that, above all, he's just a boy your age, really. He doesn't know any more about spells and the like than you do- well, defensive and offensive spells, I guess, since he's been studying those a lot... But he's... I dunno, just Harry."

"Just Harry," Nikolai repeated. "I s'pose, when it boils down to it, he is, isn't he?"

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

'Melly' suddenly stiffened. 'Ari' looked at her. "What is it?" she asked. The other woman looked forward, unseeing, and began to speak.

“The Heir of the Six approaches
So all of the Darkness take heed
The Heir of the Six approaches
The Light, fall down on your knees.
Of fire, water, earth and sun
Of light and darkness, Evil run
Of all the great that come before
The Heir of the Six shall soon come forth.
Of brav’ry, knowledge, trust, and sly
Of love and hat’r’d, spells shall fly
Of all the great that come before
The Heir of the Six shall soon come forth.
The Heir of the Six approaches
So all of the Darkness take heed
The Heir of the Six approaches
The light, fall down on their knees.”

‘Melly’ started, and looked at ‘Ari’ with wide eyes. “What did I say?”

“The Heir of the Six approaches,” was all ‘Ari’ managed before she passed out.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

The quill in Dumbledore’s office was working overtime, recording the prophecy. The quill had been created for that purpose, as

Dumbledore was waiting to see if anyone could take over and defeat Voldemort, or if they were lost.

"The Heir of the Six," Dumbledore muttered, hope lighting his eyes. "Perhaps... if I can find them first, recruit them... Get them to help me... maybe *they*..."

Little did he know that he had already alienated the subject of this particular prophecy, and would not be sinking his claws into the Heir of the Six anytime soon.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourconqueror

"So now," Harry said to Nimi, "I have all of my council except a Liason to the Ministry."

Nimi nodded thoughtfully. "Anyone else you know that you would trust?" Harry shook his head. "Then I would recommend Liutenant Grenn. He knows a lot about Ministry Laws and such, and served under me for a long time. He's a good man, about twenty four, I think."

Harry nodded thoughtfully. "I'll arrange a meeting with him tomorrow."

She acknowledged it by writing it on the notebook in her cloak pocket. "I'll speak with him about it later then." Harry grunted his approval. "Also, Harry, the people of Azkaban basically worship you right now... It might be a good idea to hold a ball, interact with the citizens, show you care about ordinary matters."

Harry choked on his own spit. "A *ball*? I don't even know how to dance!"

"Well, I can teach you. It would be a good idea."

He sighed, and nodded his consent. "All right, fine. You win. We'll host this... *ball*."

She tucked a strand of hair around her ear. "I thought we could have a Winter theme of sorts, welcoming in the new season..."

“Sounds good.”

“Alright, I’ll organize the details, but I’ll let you be the lucky one to tell Luna, Nikolai, and Remus. General Azback will hear in the general announcement.”

She was out of the room before Harry could protest, and he shook his head with a chuckle. “Tricky, that one is.”

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

“We’re having a *what?*” Remus looked completely horrified.

Nikolai shrugged. “It could be interesting, I guess.”

Luna clapped her hands together. “Oh, a ball! Nimi and I shall *have* to go together to shop for dresses!” She paused. “If it’s alright with you, Harry?”

Harry nodded. “Of course, its fine. You can use the Castle Azkaban Treasury.”

Luna impulsively hugged him. “Thank you, Harry!” Harry nodded at her and then turned to Remus. “I don’t like it either, Remus, but Nimi did have a good point. She said that I ought to get to know my subjects a bit, and she was right.”

Remus nodded with a heavy sigh. “I have two left feet.”

“Hey mate, at least *you* aren’t *required* to dance.”

“Good point.”

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

The man in the grey mist paused. He was positive he had heard his girl prophesizing... Maybe it was just a flashback, but he couldn’t remember her ever giving one about the Heir of the Six, and he was sure that would stick in his mind. The coming of the Heir of the Six

had been prophesized for generations, and it was every Seer or Seeress' aspiration to give one. He wouldn't forget something like that.

So what had that echo been? Was he going insane? Or was she truly calling to him?

And most importantly, was there a way to call back?

The Prophecy:

Okay, here's the list of who the person's the Heir of:

Rowena Ravenclaw- Water Elemental

Godric Gryffindor- Fire Elemental

Salazar Slytherin- Earth Elemental

Helga Hufflepuff- Weather Elemental

Merlin- Light Elemental

Morgaine LeFay- (the one that no one got!) Dark Elemental

The Heir is the first descendant of all six of these wizards, known as the Six, and can control all of their elements. The Heir is also extremely powerful. Make sense?

Good job to everyone who guessed!

Now on to...

Chapter Twelve: Of Shopping and Mem'ries

"Harry?"

He looked up at Nimi. "Oh, hello Nimi. What is it?"

She looked at her notebook. "I released the notice on the ball- it'll be a Winter themed Masque, held three weeks from today."

Harry nodded. "Sounds good."

Nimi hesitated. "Would... well, Luna wants to take me shopping, and I was wondering-"

Harry waved a hand. "Take the afternoon off." He paused. "You can take the carriage if you want."

A smile lit her face. "Thank you, Harry!" She hurried outside and towards Luna's room.

"Luna!" she called, knocking on the door. The blond opened it. "Harry says we can go!"

Luna's face lit up. "That's wonderful! Let me just get..." She hurried into her room and came back out, brandishing a small plate. "It's linked to the Treasury; Harry said we could use it."

Nimi nodded. "Alright then; he told me we could use the carriage. Let's go."

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

Harry looked bemusedly at the door. "Girls," he muttered. He then frowned. "What am I going to wear?" He didn't exactly have his dress robes anymore, and even if he did he couldn't really use them, as they were the robes of Harry Potter, not the Lord Azkaban.

Let's see... he'd want something black and silver, definitely no ruffles of high necklines. He really didn't trust his Transfiguration skills with this; he'd need to go to a tailor sometime in the next few days.

Someone knocked on his door and he looked up, half expecting to see Nimi again. To his surprise, Nikolai was standing there. "Come in," he said, gesturing to a chair.

Nikolai nervously sat down. After a moments silence, Harry softly asked, "Is something the matter, Nikolai?"

The boy started. "Hunh? Oh, sorry, its just... I was wondering something." Harry sat quietly, just letting the boy continue. "Luna... she accidently told me the whole story of you being innocent... And now I'm just kind of curious... how could they believe you did that?" he sat back, as if expecting a blow.

Harry smiled sadly. "I don't really know, Nikolai. I thought I could trust them, but apparently not. For some reason, they were just happy to believe I did it. Probably because Dumbledore himself believed it, and

everyone seems to believe him for some reason. Probably because he fashions himself the most powerful wizard in the past century.”

“I don’t think I would like this Dumbledore,” Nikolai said thoughtfully.

Harry laughed. “I don’t either.”

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

“What do you think of this one?” Luna asked, twirling around.

“It’s *perfect!*” Nimi exclaimed. And indeed it was. A bright, sapphire blue that perfectly matched her eyes, it had a beautiful train and had spaghetti strap sleeves that were gold, matching the embroidered trim on the square neckline and the bottom hem. It was as if it had been made for Luna herself.

“I think so too!” she called out, going back into the fitting room. Coming out with the dress on a hanger, she immediately walked over to the silver section. “Hmmm...” she muttered, picking up a dress and tossing it to Nimi. “Go try it on!”

“But I don’t want to-“

“Nimi! You are going to try on this dress!”

“Luna, I hate-“

“I don’t care! Try it on!”

Nimi shrugged, and in a moment stepped out. Luna’s mouth dropped. “Man, I’m good,” she whispered.

Nimi looked down at herself uncertainly. The dress was strapless and a dark silver, with celtic style white-gold bracelets around her wrists attaching a sheer silver material to the back of the dress. There was a high black embroidered waistline, and the dress fell elegantly from there in an almost medieval fashion. “Does it look all right?”

“Are you kidding? There won’t be a single guy at the ball that won’t try to get at least one dance in with you!”

Nimi blushed. “I like it.”

“Good! C’mon, lets go pay and look as the masks.”

Luna finally decided on a plain gold mask the same color as her embroidery, and Nimi a plain black one. With their dressed bundled, they were on their way back to the carriage when Apollo showed up.

“Mi! Where the hell have you been!”

Nimi moaned. “Oh, I’m so sorry ‘Pollo, I forgot to tell you-“

“Well, it isn’t like the whole Isle hasn’t heard by now anyways! High War Admiral and Primary Advisor! Not bad! That’s as good an excuse as any to miss the party, I s’pose.”

Nimi smacked herself on the forehead. “Damn, the party! I completely forgot.” Seeing Luna’s confused look, she introduced them. “Luna, this is my brother Apollo. Apollo, this is Luna Lovegood, Secondary Advisor to our Lord.”

Apollo bowed from the waist. “A pleasure, Advisor Lovegood.”

Luna smiled. “The same.”

Her brother turned back to her. “Well, I’m sorry to say I’ve got to be on my way; my lunch break is almost over, and the hospital will be expecting me back. I’m a Healer in training,” he added for Luna’s benefit. “They have a great program here at Azkaban. Even though it is a year longer than the Ministry ones, you get an official degree and an Azkabanian degree, which allows you to work in any of the countries in the WWMA, along with Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles.”

The blonde girl nodded. “Sounds great. Good luck!”

“Thanks.” He rumbled Nimi’s hair. “See you later, sis.”

“Later, ‘Pollo. Say ‘hi’ to Lakisha for me, won’t you?”

He inclined his head. “Will do. She misses you; you should swing by when you get the chance.”

“I will,” she promised him. With a final farewell, he walked down the street towards the hospital. She didn’t know how hard that promise would be to fulfill.

She and Luna climbed into the carriage and, as the first snowflakes of the season fell that morning, October 31st, All Hallows Eve, they returned to Castle Azkaban.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Harry glanced up at his calendar and froze. It was All Hallows Eve...

Their voices came to his mind.

“Not Harry, please not Harry!”

“Lily, it’s him, take Harry and run!”

This was the anniversary of the day he became the Boy-Who-Lived, the day that his parents died. He looked up to find that he had tears on his face and that Remus was sitting in the chair across from him. “What’s wrong, Prongslet?”

“Anniversary,” he croaked out.

Remus’ eyes widened in understanding, and then he squeezed them shut. “I lost track of the time,” he said in a choked voice.

Harry sighed and looked at his hands. “What- what were they like?” He asked, looking at Remus. “I mean I know that my dad loved to prank, and my mum and dad used to fight a lot... but that’s really it.”

Remus smiled slightly. “I wondered when you would ask.” He sighed. “Lily loved to read, and had some of the best grades in class, but the

last place you would look for her was the Library. The first place would be the boy's dorm."

Harry raised an eyebrow and snorted, tears forgotten. "The boy's dorm? Why?"

Remus laughed. "Well, Lily and I were always good friends, and whenever she was upset she would go curl up in our dorm and we would just talk. That was how James started to like her- he met her through me."

"What was my dad like?"

"Well, he loved pranks, like you know, but he was also very smart- he tied with Sirius for the third highest OWL and NEWT scores in our year, behind Lily and myself. And he always, always cared for others; if there was a chance a prank would hurt someone, he would veto it... unless, of course, it was on Snape. They'd always hated each other, mainly because Snape had an obsession with calling Lily a Mudblood."

Harry smirked. "I always knew there was a reason why I didn't like the bastard."

The two dissolved into laughter, the cause of their pain not forgotten, but accepted, as comes with life; for life goes on, despite the pain of the ones it drags on its short leash.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

The man in the grey mist stared into the space in front of him.

There was nothing remarkable about this space; he was just glancing at it, his eyes glazed, almost as though it were something he had waited years to find.

And, in his mind, it was, for he had substituted the space with the image of his wife.

Could she be alive? He had thought he had heard her, twice now. But she could have just as easily been calling from beyond the grave as before it, for as near as he could tell he was in some sort of limbo. But he hoped...

He had lost hope, all those years ago, and thought she was dead. He had lost hope what seemed like months ago, though he couldn't be sure, and thought he would be stuck in here forever. But now...

What if she was still alive? What if there was a way for him to get out?

What if?

Chapter Thirteen: Solemnly Swear

Nimi adjusted her mask nervously.

“Oh come on, you look great!” Luna said, clearly exasperated. She then smirked. “I’m sure Harry will love your dress.”

Nimi’s mouth dropped open, and she turned a very interesting shade of red. “I- he- we- we don’t-“

Luna chuckled. “That’s what you’re saying now. How come you agreed to go with him then, huh?”

“Well- we’re just going as friends, you know that! And what about you and Nikolai, eh?”

It was Luna’s turn to blush. “Well, we’re going as friends too!”

Nimi looked at her with a raised eyebrow. “Uh-huh. Sure.” Before a full scale fight could break out, Remus Lupin poked his head in.

“You girls ready?”

Still blushing, they nodded, and walked into the darkened corridor, heading towards the Grand Ballroom, where the Winter Ball was to be held. Harry was waiting outside, wearing black dress robes with a silver trim. Actually, they looked much like regular robes as they had a normal neckline, but the drawn hood, also with silver trim, made up for that.

What she could see of his eyes widened in the shadows his hood cast. “You look great, Nimi. You too, Luna.”

Luna smiled. “Thank you, Harry.” She turned to Nikolai, who was dressed in white dress robes of a regular cut with a white mask on his face. “Hello, Nikolai.”

Nikolai, looking awestruck, offered Luna his arm, which she took, and led her into the ballroom, where, as they paused on the top of the stairs, were announced as “Secondary Advisor Luna Lovegood and Liason to the Azkabanians Nikolai Nadreski”.

Nimi groaned as the doors shut again. "I forgot that we have to be introduced..."

Harry chuckled. "They'll have a bit of trouble with you... 'High War Admiral and Primary Advisor Nimi Stardreamer'..."

She playfully hit him on the arm. "Oh, do shut up." Taking a deep breath, she straightened a few of the folds in her gown so it looked right.

"You ready?"

She turned to him and nodded. "As I'll ever be. Alright, let's go."

They stepped through the door, her hand on his bent arm, and the room went silent as the crier announced "Our Lord Azkaban of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles and High War Admiral and Primary Advisor Nimi Stardreamer!"

Wild applause broke out as they made their way down the steps. "See? They love you," Harry murmured in her ear with an evil smirk on his face.

She laughed softly. "Oh, do shut up."

They finally reached the dance floor, where everyone stared at Harry in awe and the musicians looked at him as though asking a question. Harry turned to Nimi and smirked. 'Oh no,' she thought. "Something jazzy," Harry called out.

The band immediately struck up a rendition of 'Paper Moon' and Harry offered his hands to Nimi. With a heavy sigh, she took them, knowing full well what would happen next.

When she had taught Harry to dance, she had decided to show him a few different styles. Waltz, slow, jazz, and... swing.

He had, for some reason, really liked the last one, and had since swing danced whenever she had allowed it. And she couldn't exactly say no now, as the whole room was looking at them with anticipation to see what they would do.

She shook her head and chuckled. Truth was, she loved swing dancing too, though Harry was a tad fanatical about it. She held out her hands, which he immediately grabbed, and then they were moving.

The others soon joined in, and soon the Hall was a mass of whirling robes. Harry laughed as he spun Nimi around, and she grinned. It was good to see him happy; he always seemed so depressed.

Maybe for once he could let go of his pain and just have fun.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

Mel stared at a spot on the wall.

“What are you doing?”

Her concentration didn’t even flicker. “I’m focusing my magical energy, Ari. And trying to burn through the wall.”

“Ooookay... is that the PMS talking?”

This time Mel did turn and glare at her. “No, it’s not! Geez...” She turned back to the wall.

“Ah, so you admit you have PMS.”

“I never said that!”

“Yes.”

“No.”

“Yes.”

“No.”

“Yes.”

“No.”

“Yes.”

“No.”

“CRUCIO!”

The last one would, of course, be Malfoy, who had walked in a few seconds before.

After spending a few moments recovering from the curse, as it had been cast on both of them, Mel shouted “Ha! I win! I didn’t!”

Ari pouted weakly. “Oh fine.”

Well, they had to get their kicks somehow.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

Nimi was happy that she had forced Harry to agree not to do swing dancing the whole night before the ball actually turned up because she knew that he would have loved to do so.

Something wet fell on her head, and she looked up to see Harry crying. “My Lord?” she whispered. “What’s wrong?”

He shook his head. “It’s- it’s not really important.” At her insistent look, he sighed and said “I was just wishing that Sirius was here, is all. I head him humming this tune at Grimm- his house, once, and it just made me think of what could have happened if he hadn’t fallen behind that goddamn Veil and if I hadn’t been so-“

Nimi interrupted him. “Wait. Did you say Veil?” Harry nodded. “As in, the Veil in the Department of Mysteries?”

He raised an eyebrow. “Ummm... yeah. I already told you all this-“

“I guess I just spaced out... I should have thought... Should have realized...”

“Realized what?” Harry asked, frowning, tears forgotten.

“Harry,” she whispered, “The Veil was designed by the fourth Lord of Azkaban as a way of forever banishing prisoners, as he was much against the Dementor’s Kiss. In the year 1483, however, 57 years after its creation, the Ministry classified it as ‘highly dangerous’ and confiscated the building it was held in, which later became the Department of Mysteries.

“What they hadn’t realized, however, was that the fifth Lord of Azkaban, the son of the creator of the Veil, had hidden, along with four of his council, intending to right the wrong his predecessor had made, in the building in a secret passage after it was taken and, when the Veil was no longer guarded, performed a ritual to remove all of the criminals, after which he killed all 467 of them with the Avada Kedavra curse, one of the first mass killings with that spell.”

Harry stared at her. “You’re saying that-“

She nodded. “There’s a way to break him out.”

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourconqueror

A mother looked at her husband. “He’s finally found out.”

The father laughed. “You’d think that as my son he could have found out sooner! I pride myself on discovering secrets!” There was a comfortable silence as the two just held each other.

“Do you think he misses us?” the woman asked suddenly. “We’ve never really seen anything other than the bare bones... I don’t even know what’s been happening to him at Hogwarts.”

The man planted a kiss on her hair. “He does, but I wish he didn’t. He’s my son, my baby boy, and I don’t want him to hurt, but I can tell he does.”

The woman nodded with a sigh. “That’s what I thought.” She paused. “I miss him, James.”

“I know, Lily, I know.”

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Hedwig hooted indignantly at the owner of Eeylops. She, along with all of her Master Harry's possessions, had been sold upon his imprisonment, and she had ended up here.

She was sick of it.

She wanted to fly, to be free, to have her Master Harry feed her bits of bacon... She hadn't realized how good her life had been until it was ripped out of her grasp like that.

She wanted to stretch her wings...

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Hermione Granger concentrated deeply, her nose wrinkled in thought. With careful precision, she added exactly three dung beetle eyes. And then, of course, she thought of Harry and her hands began to shake with fury.

The stupid bastard. She should have realized he was turning, those 'visions' from Voldemort were probably the Dark Lord giving him information. She couldn't see what Luna Lovegood's problem was; how could she have just floated around the school, saying Potter was innocent?

And then there was that Lord of Azkaban character. She did not like him one bit. He had said that Luna, of all people, was one of the few in the Wizarding World with any sense! He had insulted her intelligence! And how could he have thought that that, that... girl would be a better Advisor than she would! Not that she had ever offered, but still! If he was going to pick a student...

She angrily stirred her cauldron. Why did that bitch Lovegood get to go and not her? She would show the Lord Azkaban! She would get the highest grades Hogwarts had ever seen, and then he would be begging her to replace Lovegood!

Due to the vigorous stirring, her cauldron blew up, and she was left with singed-off eyebrows and a look of shock on her face.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

Luna and Nikolai were happily dancing when Nimi ran over and began to whisper. "It's very important, it's to do with the Godfather."

Luna and Nikolai's eyes both widened and they hurried off with Nimi while Harry and Remus, both looking rather pale, stood in front of the musicians while everyone slowly stopped dancing and looked at them. "I am terribly sorry," Harry said calmly, "but something very important has come up concerning a friend of mine. Please, continue; I hope to be back shortly." With that, he nodded to the musicians who picked up where they had left off, and whispered something to Remus, who nodded. They both walked over to where Nimi, Luna, and Nikolai were.

"Ok," Harry said grimly, "let's go."

He pulled off one of his shoes, and tapped it, muttering "Portus." The shoe glowed for a moment, and he motioned for all of them to put a finger on it. They did so, and in a moment and a whirl of color, were off.

They landed with a thunk in a corridor in the Department of Mysteries. Harry hurriedly pulled on his shoe before turning to his right. "This way," he said, his voice tight.

They all hurried after him as he ran through a door and stopped short, seeing what he was looking for. A tattered black veil hung innocently from a stone archway, looking for all the world just like a curtain. Harry was glaring at it as though willing it to go up in flames.

"Okay," Nimi said, taking charge. "First, we need to make a pentacle. Remus, stand on the right of the Veil, Luna the left, Nikolai here in the back, Harry in front of the Veil, and I'll stand here." Once everyone was arranged to her satisfaction she spoke again.

“You’re going to say this but sub in the information that would fit you. I go first, then Nikolai, then Remus, then Luna, then Harry. Harry, I’ll tell you what to say when you finish that. Here we go.” She took a deep breath and splayed her fingers out in the air in front of her. “I, Nimi Gemini Stardreamer, solemnly swear on my soul that I come to free one Sirius Black, the accused, from the eternal hell of the Veil. On my soul I solemnly swear thus.”

Nikolai took over. “I, Nikolai Alexander Nadreski, solemnly swear on my soul that I come to free one Sirius Black, the accused, from the eternal hell of the Veil. On my soul I solemnly swear thus.”

“I, Remus John Lupin, solemnly swear on my soul that I come to free one Sirius Black, the accused, from the eternal hell of the Veil. On my soul I solemnly swear thus.”

“I, Luna Elizabeth Lovegood, solemnly swear on my soul that I come to free one Sirius Black, the accused, from the eternal hell of the Veil. On my soul I solemnly swear thus.”

“I, Harry James Potter, solemnly swear on my soul that I come to free one Sirius Black, the accused, from the eternal hell of the Veil. On my soul I solemnly swear thus.”

A wind picked up, and through the howling Nimi called out “Harry! Say ‘Return to the world of the living, Sirius Black, and be free!’”

“Return to the living, Sirius Black, and be free!” Harry roared, and the wind stopped as time seemed to stand still. The Veil flashed with a golden light, and a black shape hurtled out of it and to the ground, where it remained motionless. The curtains fluttered for a moment, and then fell still.

Harry stared in shock at the man on the floor in front of him, his chest rising in shallow breaths. Padfoot rode again.

Chapter Fourteen: Reunion

Sirius woke up in a bed.

He immediately sat up and looked around, finding himself, to his shock, in a room with dark silver walls and curtains hanging around the bed he currently resided in. A hand pulled back the curtain, and he came face-to-face with Remus Lupin.

"Remus?" he whispered in shock, his voice hoarse from unuse. "What- how-"

The man came forward and caught him in a bear hug. "Don't you ever scare us like that again, mate!"

Sirius just continued to stare at him. "Moony? How... I fell..."

Remus nodded, his expression grim. "Yep. We thought we lost you. But the Lord of Azkaban's High War Admiral and Primary Advisor, she knew some ritual to do with the Veil, says it was in an old book in her Great-Aunt's house... she told the Lord of Azkaban, and he got you out."

"I'm at Azkaban?" The fear and horror of old repressed pain was evident in his voice.

Remus winced. "Well, not the prison, because the Lord... the Lord has legally granted you citizenship to the Island, which makes you void to Ministry punishment. You're in the Hospital Wing here right now."

"Where's Harry?"

The other man sighed. "That's sort of a long explanation, Padfoot."

Sirius felt his heart clench with an icy fear. "Remus, *where is my godson?*"

Remus sighed again and pulled back the curtain. "Nimi!" he called. A girl looking to be about thirteen or fifteen showed up almost immediately.

“Yes Remus?”

“Could you please get Lord Azkaban and tell him that Sirius has woken up?”

The girl’s eyes widened, and he could hear her feet slapping the ground as she ran out the door.

‘Who was that? And why do we need to talk to the Lord of Azkaban?’

“That, Sirius, was the High War Admiral and Primary Advisor of the Lord of Azkaban, and we need to talk to him because he can explain about Harry a hell of a lot better than I can.”

“*What?* But she can’t be more than-“

“Fourteen, but she’s already passed standard curriculum grades one through five and her OWL’s with all O’s, I believe.”

Sirius stared at Remus. “Right.” Then something occurred to him. “Why would the Lord of Azkaban be able to explain Harry’s situation better than you?”

“Because, Mr. Black, I am a witness.”

Sirius snapped his head up to look at the man in the dark cloak, his eyes shaded by his hood. “A witness? What do you mean?” He added, as an afterthought, “Lord Azkaban.”

The man sighed, and looked to the girl, the one Remus had called Nimi, behind him. She gave him a pointed look and he nodded before turning back to face Sirius. “I must ask you this, Mr. Black. If Harry were to confess under Veritaserum that he had killed someone, at a trial where he could be imprisoned to Azkaban, and after he was out of the influence of the potion claimed he was innocent, would you believe him?”

“Yes,” Sirius said without hesitation.

The Lord of Azkaban cracked a rather large smile. “I was hoping you would say that. Because that’s what happened.”

“What?” Sirius breathed.

“Another innocent was sent to Azkaban Prison.”

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

Ari stared at nothing in particular, thinking of him. Of her love.

They had never had the same kind of relationship as Mel and her husband had; theirs was more of a quiet thing, murmured “I love you”s by the fire side, sharing a butterbeer in Hogsmeade, holding hands in the hallways.

She had never cared about what he was, because to her, he was him. Just him. It didn’t matter if he turned into something else once a month; hell, the way she saw it, she did too.

They had married a year after graduating, about a month before Lily and James and two months after Mel and Sirius. She could remember that day so clearly, her father giving her away, her mother with tears in her eyes. They, along with James and Remus’ parents had been killed in a battle with Voldemort not four months later. They had all been Aurors. Mel and Sirius’ parents had joined Voldemort and were killed in the same battle by Dumbledore himself. Lily’s parents had died in an attack on her home two months after that.

The war had been dark and bloody, and they had been lucky to stay alive. And then she had been captured.

She was sure she was going to die, but what happened was worse; they took a few of her hairs and made a Permanent Polyjuice potion that they then applied to a Muggle that they had captured before killing her. From what she had gathered, they had sent the body to the doorstep of her and Remus’ home. They had taunted her ever since then with stories of the look on her husband’s face, the pain they could see in his eyes.

And then, not two weeks later, they had captured Mel. They had thrown her in the cell, and she had started to cry when she saw Ari, explaining what was happening in the outside world and that she had

thought her dead. Once Ari had told Mel what had happened to her, both were surprised when no one took Mel's hairs to make a Permanent Polyjuice as they had done for Ari. They didn't have long to wonder; three weeks later, the Dark Lord was defeated and they were moved to the Malfoy Manor where they were told in mocking tones what was happening.

The Dark Lord had suspected that he might be temporarily defeated and had wanted to prepare for such an occasion. When Mel had been captured, a splel scan had found her pregnant, and Voldemort had decided to give her the *honor* of her child being taken away to be raised as the Dark Lord's successor.

For the nine months after that, Mel had taken to rubbing her stomach whenever she was nervous and singing softly to her unborn child. At least she hadn't been tortured then; the trauma of being put under the Cruciatus or watching her friend put under it could harm Mel's baby, and as the Manor had only one cell they were pretty much left alone.

And then Mel had gone into labor. They had both been terrified that day, but luckily for them, Severus was the guard on duty. He still wasn't on the best of terms with Mel, and had never been with Ari, but they knew he was a spy for Dumbledore and for some reason he decided to help them. Maybe it was because the baby would be a relative of his; maybe it was because he hadn't known they were captured and wanted to get out to tell Dumbledore. But whatever the reason, once the baby had been born Severus had agreed to take her, a beautiful little girl that Mel had named after her grandmother, one of the few in her family that had been kind to her, and put her in an orphanage, claiming to the other Death Eaters that she was dead.

Neither of them had seen Snape since then; apparently Malfoy had suspected something though he was unable to prove it. And slowly, their hope of Dumbledore finding out where they were and sending help had glimmered away. They had heard inspections by the Ministry on the upper floors countless times but no one could find the entrance to the cell and the hallway in front of it. Severus had been brought there and left by Portkey, so even he knew naught how to get there, and the charms on the Manor were too strong to do a spell that would locate them.

And she knew for a fact that Remus still thought her dead. Malfoy loved to rub that in her face, and she couldn't help but wonder why Dumbledore hadn't told him. Maybe the man wasn't worth as much of their trust as she had thought when going to Hogwarts and in the years after.

Maybe he didn't even care that they were prisoners, being tortured, that Mel hadn't seen her daughter since the day she was born, that Ari's husband thought her dead and that Mel's husband might be.

Maybe he didn't care at all.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

Sirius stared at the Lord of Azkaban. "My godson," he whispered, "My godson's in prison for something he didn't do?"

"Not anymore," Lord Azkaban said softly, and pulled back his hood. Green eyes stared into Sirius'.

"Harry?" he whispered in shock.

Harry nodded, and walked over to beside Sirius' bed. "I thought- I thought you were dead, Sirius-"

Without a thought, he pulled his godson into a tight hug. "I missed you kiddo," he muttered into his hair.

"I missed you too, Sirius."

They pulled apart after a moment, both trying to unobtrusively wipe at their eyes. "What happened to you, Harry?"

Harry sighed and sat down. "Well, that's a bit of a long story. You see..."

By the time he had finished, Sirius officialy decided he had never felt so confused in his life. He was furious at the Wizarding World for betraying Harry, immensely grateful to the Nimi girl for rescuing him,

sympathetic and proud of Harry at the same time, and happy just to be back alive.

“Harry,” he said quietly. “Harry, don’t you think for a minute that the Dursley’s were your fault. Or me, for that matter. I would gladly die for you, Harry James Potter.”

Harry’s eyes were shining with tears. Neither of them noticed that the rest of the people in the room had slipped out to give them their much needed privacy for a heart-to-heart. “But Sirius, it was my fault. If I hadn’t been so *stupid*-“

“Wanting to save someone isn’t stupid Harry. You were smart enough to at least try and check the house, even if that goddamn House Elf did trick you.” At the look of pain and disbelief on Harry’s face, Sirius grabbed him by the shoulders. “Harry, listen to me. *I do not blame you*. It was my fault, for getting cocky. It wasn’t your fault, and it never will be. I don’t blame you Harry, I never will.”

Harry nodded, a tear slipping down his cheek. “Thank you Sirius,” he whispered hoarsely.

Sirius grinned and ruffled his hair. “Don’t mention it, Prongslet.”

The boy frowned at him. “Prongslet? Remus has called me that too, before. I never really thought about it...”

Sirius laughed. “That was what I used to call you, when you were a baby.”

Harry smiled. “Prongslet. I like it.” He paused. “As you know, I’m the Lord of Azkaban.”

“Yes...” Sirius said slowly at the change of topic.

“Well, here’s the thing. Every Lord of Azkaban needs a council. I already have my Primary Advisor, Nimi, a High War Admiral, that’s her as well, two Secondary Advisors, Remus and Luna, a Prison Warden, his name’s Orous Azback, and a liason to the Azkabanians, Nikolai Nadreski. What I don’t have is another Secondary Advisor and a Liason to the Ministry.” He stopped for a moment, as though to

catch his train of thought. "I was thinking about making Lieutenant Grenn Liason to the Ministry, because Nimi recommended him, but now that I think about it Remus would be good as well, he knows all the laws-"

"But Harry, he's a werewolf. The Ministry wouldn't-"

Harry grinned. "You mean I forgot to tell you? He isn't a werewolf anymore. I found the cure."

Sirius stared at him. "You *what?*"

"I found the cure by mixing a bunch of potions, along with the Wolfsbane, that I found in Maxime Moste Potente Potions, which can conveniently be found in the Azkaban Library." He stormed on. "But anyways, I was wondering if- well, if you'd be one of my Secondary Advisors." Misinterpreting the look Sirius gave him, Harry hastily said "You don't have to, really-"

Sirius cut him off. "Harry, I would be honored to. It's just, people think I'm a criminal-"

"Remus already told you that I made you a citizen, which means that the Ministry can't try and put you back in jail, and if they did, I could sue them and tell the guards just to take you right out. Besides, all of my Council and I wear robes charmed so that the hood always shadows our face and only we, of our own free will, can take it off. No one will ever really see you, because you'll have that on. It worked for me, and everyone thinks I'm guilty! Please, Sirius?"

Sirius laughed. "When you put it that way, Prongslet, how can I say no?"

An excited grin broke out on Harry's face. "Perfect! Here, I'll-" He muttered a spell under his breath and Sirius' clothes turned to the Council robes with the hood pulled up.

Harry pulled his hood up as well, and as they both stood and looked at each other across the hospital bed, Harry said formally "I welcome you into the ranks of my Council, Secondary Advisor Sirius Black. I pray you find peace there."

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

She had always sang to her unborn child.

It had been a variety of songs, but all soft and sweet, never real lullabys but it got the message across, the message of love, pure, unadulterated love. The one she sang most often was the one that Lily had always used to sing Harry to sleep, one that she said she had heard in a Muggle movie. Mel had thought it was beautiful, and endeavored to learn it until she sang it as well as Lily.

Lily... how she missed her, one of her two best friends. She hadn't met Lily or Ari until fifth year, when she had transferred to Hogwarts, but they had formed a bond all the same over their love of magic and music.

She had actually despised Sirius at first; mainly because he despised her, thinking she was a Pureblooded git in love with Snape. When he found out that the only reason she was talking to Snape that first day was because he was her cousin, he had slowly stopped harrasing her, and eventually they had become friends. They had helped get Lily and James together, along with Ari and Remus and Frank and Alice. The two of them had become known as the Hogwarts Matchmakers, and it was a long standing joke that the Martchmakers would eventually have to matchmake themselves. In sixth year, shortly after their first date, they found out that there had been a pool on how long it would take them to get together and Lily had won. She wouldn't talk to Lily for two weeks after that.

And then they had formed their band, the Weird Sisters, and James had joined them as drummer, saying that he could be the first Weird Brother... they had laughed him off and jokingly called him a Weird Sister for the rest of his life.

She remembered how Remus had been when Ari had gone missing. He had come to James and Lily's house, pale and shaking, with the fake body wrapped in cloth in his arms. Of course, they hadn't known it was fake at the time. She and Sirius had been there, though he hadn't noticed them at first... it had been horrible. The funeral was a week later, and Remus cried through the whole thing, even his eulogy.

She had hated Voldemort more than ever at that moment, and sworn to fight against him with all of her power for the rest of her life. Little had she known she would end up as his prisoner a week after that.

When she had found out she was pregnant... joy and hatred had mixed together all at once. Joy, that she would have a child, a child of her own... and hatred of the men and women who wanted to take that child away, raise it as their own, as what she had sworn long ago never to become.

But her cousin had agreed to take her child to an orphanage... she hadn't wanted to give her to Dumbledore, for as she had been told Sirius was arrested for being a Death Eater, she didn't know what Dumbledore would do with his child.

She had never doubted Sirius' innocence, not once, not even before Wormtail had been put on guard duty one night and all had been revealed. The traitorous rat. She would make sure he was sent to Azkaban one day, where he could rot in hell forever. He would pay. He would pay, for taking her husband away from her, for taking her away from the world, for killing two of her best friends, for forcing her to abandon her child...

Oh yes, he would pay.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourconqueror

A guard knocked tentatively on the door to the Throne Room, and Harry called out "Enter," his conversation with the part of his Council staying at the Castle cut short.

The guard poked his head in and smiled apologetically. "I'm sorry, My Lord, but that man... Dumblydoore, I think his name was, he's here, insisting on seeing you. Should I throw him out?" Harry's countenance darkened, and Sirius snarled. Harry put a restraining hand on his godfather's shoulder and sighed.

"I'll speak with him, I think I know why he's here."

The guard nodded and scurried out. Sirius turned to Harry. "Why *do* you think he's here?"

"Either he wants to try and persuade me to join the Order again, which I don't doubt, or else he also somehow found out about me freeing you. Sirius, please make sure not to reveal who I am or that you know that I'm innocent; Dumbledore thinks I'm guilty, and I told him that Harry Potter died in his sleep because of the Dementor's influence. You can still be indignant though, as your godson's supposedly just died."

Sirius nodded, just as the doors open and twelve guards escorted in Albus Dumbledore, the high and mighty Bumbling-bee himself. "Ahh, my Lord Azkaban!" Dumbledore said, eyes twinkling and bowing. "I am very glad you've agreed to see me."

Harry raised an eyebrow. "Indeed. Why are you here, Mr. Dumbledore?"

"You see, it's come to my attention that- ah- a friend of mine-"

Harry motioned to the guards to leave the room and shut the door, which they did. "If you are talking about Sirius Black, he has been granted citizenship, and therefore is immune to the laws of the Ministry, and is now my Secondary Advisor." He nodded towards Sirius.

Dumbledore's eyes widened. "Mr. Black, I must ask you to come back-"

"No, Albus. I officially resign from the Order of the Phoenix. You locked my godson away, and he *died!*"

"Well, my dear boy, he did kill his relatives-" Harry shot Sirius a look to keep him from responding to that.

"It does not matter," Harry said coldly. "Mr. Black, as I said, is now a member of my Council, and you cannot force him to rejoin you."

Albus opened his mouth as though to say something, and then just shook his head, the twinkle absent from his eyes. "Very well. You are sure you won't-

Harry sighed exasperatedly. "No, for the last time, I won't join your Order! Guards!" They immediately appeared. "Kindly escort this man from the Isle."

"Yes my Lord," the captain of the unit murmured with a bow, grabbing Dumbledore by the arms and pulling him out of the Throne Room, the other guards following and the doors slamming shut behind them. They were alone once more.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

Safely back in his office, Albus Dumbledore sighed and sunk into his chair, mentally berating himself. He had almost revealed to Black that he knew the location of his wife. No, that information had to be saved for when the time was right, when he could somehow use it to get the Lord of Azkaban on his side...

An opportunity would crop up soon. Of that, Dumbledore didn't doubt. He was always good at sensing these things.

Chapter Fifteen: Laughing

Harry picked up the Daily Prophet and promptly dropped it in shock before picking it up again and hurriedly reading.

Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles Age Scandal!

by: Rita Skeeter

In a shocking announcement this morning, Minister Fudge released that the new Lord Azkaban is only sixteen years old, not the twenty two he claimed. "Yes, well, a friend of mine, he's an Azkabanian, he told me that the Lord Azkaban is a minor, only sixteen you see... There'll be a Wizengamot meeting on the twenty fifth to determine what school he should go to..."

This reporter wonders why the Lord Azkaban lied; was there some particular reason he didn't want to be found out? Time will only tell.

Harry threw the paper down in disgust. Sirius walked in at that moment, yawning. It was, after all, five in the morning. Seeing Harry throw down the paper and the look on his face Sirius stopped mid-stretch.

"Harry? What's wrong?"

Harry scowled and tossed the paper to him. "Read it," he said, his voice tight.

Sirius' expression turned gradually darker as he did so, and by the time *he* threw it on the floor, he was fuming. "Those- those bastards!" he stuttered in anger. He had no time to elaborate on the Ministry, however, as there was a knocking on the door.

Harry immediately Transfigured their clothes to hooded robes before calling out "Come in."

It turned out it was a good thing he had Transfigured the robes, as it was none other than Cornelius Fudge, followed by three guards, that entered the room. "Lord Azkaban," Fudge said simperingly, bowing. "I

trust you have read this morning's Prophet?" At Harry's grudging nod, Fudge smiled toothily. "Perfect, my Lord."

Harry felt his temper rising. That was what Death Eaters said to Voldemort. "Do not call me that."

Fudge immediately nodded. "Of course, my- Lord Azkaban. I presume that I'll be able to find you at the Wizengamot meeting in two days?"

"I'm exempt from Ministry Laws as the Lord of Azkaban." That was when the argument began.

"But, according to the Underage Wizard Laws, any citizen of any country or hierarchy, and that includes Azkaban, can be forced by the British Ministry of Magic to attend a wizarding school of the Wizengamot's choice, as long as the aforementioned wizard is on British soil, which, may I remind you, Azkaban is."

"Only in the Muggle world is this Isle considered part of Great Britain, not Magical."

"Yes, but according to the Decree of 1812, any and all Magical land is to be divided, for educational purposes, by Muggle boundaries."

"I've already passed my sixth year in courses, along with the final exams."

"Then you'll be going into seventh, Lord Azkaban."

"Seventh years have priveleges-"

"That Decree was overridden, stating that instead it would be those seventeen and older, as a fourteen year old passed sixth year at one point."

Harry sighed; he knew that the Minister had him. "Alright. I'll go to your hearing." Seeing Fudge's look of glee, he held up a hand. "I'll be stating my terms then."

It appeared that nothing could burst Fudge's bubble. The man nodded like a Muggle bobble-head doll and smiled broadly. "Excellent, Lord Azkaban! I'll be leaving now." He swept out of the room adjusting his bowler hat and once more the guards followed before the door swung shut.

Harry sank into a chair and began, in short order, to bang his head against the table. Before what would have made a rather large thunk, Sirius reached out and caught his head. "It'll be all right Harry," he said quietly.

Harry shook his head and tried to stop himself from crying. "No, it won't! They'll make me go to Hogwarts, and I'll have to face them all alone, and-

"And I'll be going with you," said Nimi, stepping out of the shadows.

"Me too," said Luna, doing the same.

"I as well," said Nikolai, who had been hiding as well.

Harry stared at them. "But- I- you don't have to-

"We're not going to leave you there alone, Harry!" Nimi exclaimed. "Besides, we helped Luna and Nikolai pass sixth year as well, remember? We'll get through the remainder of seventh year together, and then we'll be free!"

"Yes, Harry! I really don't mind going back, after all, you and Nimi and Niikolai will be there, and I doubt you'll let anyone tease me!"

"And I'm not about to abandon the Lord Azkaban to a bunch of idiots!"

Harry had to smile. "You really don't have to-

"But we will," Nimi said, and her tone brooked no rebuff.

Harry grinned. "Thanks, guys."

"We'll be coming as well," Sirius said, gesturing to himself and Remus who, it appeared, had been hiding along with the other three.

Harry threw his hands up in the air, though he was still smiling. "I suppose I have no choice in the matter, do I?"

There was a chorus of "No"s.

"Oh, fine. But no hexing Dumbledore."

"DAMN!"

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourconqueror**

"Lord Azkaban, you stand before the Wizengamot Council today--"

"Sit," Harry corrected.

"What?" Fudge asked, confused.

"I'm sitting," Harry said, gesturing to the chair, "Not standing."

"Well," Fudge spluttered, "You- you knew what I meant! Fine! You *sit* before the Wizengamot Council today to determine what wizarding school you shall attend. Discussion may now begin."

Harry sat back and watched as arguments immediately sprouted up.

"Beauxbatons! 'Ee must attend Beuxbatons!"

"No! Durmstrang!"

"Salem!"

"The Australia School of Magics!"

"Yeah right, we're going to send him halfway around the world!"

"Yeah, why not!"

"Ladies and gentlemen!" Dumbledore thundered, standing up. All conversation immediately ended and all eyes turned to Dumbledore. Harry rolled his. "I believe it would make more sense for the Lord Azkaban to go to a school closer to his home."

'Oh yeah,' Harry thought, 'Here it comes.'

"I agree," Minister Fudge said. "Would Hogwarts be suitable?"

With both the Chief Warlock and the Minister for the Lord going to Hogwarts, they couldn't exactly argue. A grudging mutter of "fine" and "sounds good" and "I suppose" made its way around the room.

"It's fine with me, Minister," Dumbledore said with a bow.

"Alright then. All who vote for Hogwarts?" The far majority of the assembly raised their hands. "Very well. Lord Azkaban, do you have anything to say?"

Harry nodded. "I have a few terms."

"Very well," Dumbledore said. "Name them."

"First off," Harry said, "my three friends-" he nodded towards Nimi, Luna, and Nikolai, "- will be attending along with me and two of my Secondary Advisors, who insist on coming." He mock glared at Sirius and Remus, who waved cheekily back.

"That is acceptable," the Headmaster announced. "Your other terms?"

"You will find that all of my friends and I have passed our O.W.L.'s with all O's-" he was suddenly very glad that Nimi had had him retake them, along with Nikolai, in everything, even things he hadn't studied before "- and our sixth year exams with perfect 100's in every class. In short, I want all of us placed in seventh year."

Dumbledore nodded. "Quite alright. Was there anything else?"

"Yes," Harry said with a nod. "We are to be treated as our own house of Azkaban- I will not have my Council separated."

"You would not necessarily be-"

"But we might."

"Alright, I suppose."

Harry smiled tightly and stood. "Alright. Now, if you will give us a supply list- we will be keeping our own robes, so they are not necessary."

He nodded. "I expected as much. Here is a list of the Seventh Year books needed, although I will need to know which classes you will be taking."

They had already discussed this and come to a decision. "We will be taking NEWT Defense Against the Dark Arts, NEWT Charms, NEWT Transfiguration, NEWT Potions, NEWT Arithmancy, NEWT Ancient Runes, NEWT Astronomy, and NEWT History of Magic."

Dumbledore looked rather surprised, but only nodded, and said "You will also all need at least two seventh year electives, no more than four."

Harry frowned. He hadn't heard of those. "What are the options?"

"Duelling, Teacher Apprentice, Wandless Magic Studies, Wandless Fighting, Ancient Magical Wars, Atlantean History and Studies, Healing, and Home Economics, which is a required class and does not count towards the four total."

Harry raised his eyebrows at the mention of Home Economics, but he supposed that they weren't about to send them out into the world without it. He walked to where the other three soon-to-be-students to discuss their options.

"Home Economics?" Nimi whispered. "Crap!"

Harry laughed softly. "Yeah, that about sums that up." He paused. "I want to take four electives, but you guys don't have-"

"But we will," Luna said, and the others nodded.

"All right. I was interested in Wandless Magic and Wandless Fighting, it might come in handy."

"Sounds good," Nikolai said.

"I think Healing would be good too," Nimi said. "I mean, we are in the middle of a war."

Harry nodded. "I agree. So what's our fourth course?"

"Either Dueling or Teacher Apprentice," Luna said. "Dueling could come in handy in the war as well, and Teacher Apprentice lets you focus more on training to become a teacher for a subject. Dueling would probably be better."

Harry nodded. "Dueling, Wandless Magic, Wandless Fighting, and Healing. Sounds good to me." The others nodded, and Harry nodded back. "I'll tell the Bumbling-Bee."

Harry walked back over to the center of the room. "We will be attending Dueling, Wandless Magic, Wandless Fighting, and Healing."

"Certainly. Here are your schedules and supply lists."

Harry accepted them and bowed mockingly. "A pleasure, Mr. Dumbledore." He swept out of the room before anyone could say another word, followed by Sirius, Remus, Nimi, Luna, and Nikolai. Once outside the courtroom, he proceeded to bang his head against the wall. That seemed to be happening a lot lately.

"Harry?" Nimi questioned.

He sighed, turned to face his friends, surrogate uncle, and godfather and smiled. "Let's go home."

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourconqueror**

"Ari?"

The blonde woman turned to look at Mel. "Yes?"

She hesitated. "D'you- d'you ever wonder why he doesn't come, and then feel guilty about it afterwards because you know he doesn't know where you are... but you can't help thinking it?"

Ari didn't even have to ask who the 'he' was; she just sighed and smiled sadly. "All the time. And then I remember that he thinks I'm dead, and I feel so horrible because I know that I would be dying inside if our positions were reversed, and I thought him dead..."

Mel nodded. "Thank you."

"You're welcome."

There was a long silence, and then Mel's voice drifted up in a haunting tone.

"The only thing that ever made sense to me
Is the words to a song in an american movie.
The only thing that ever made sense in my life
Ooh, ooh, is the sound of my little girl laughing
Through the window of a summer's night."

Ari just listened. She had never heard this song before, but she could guess why Mel had written it. She had always said that the one thing that she missed the most about not being able to see her daughter growing up was hearing her laugh.

"I sing along in the backyard
Wishing I could be inside
Just the sound of my little girl laughing
Makes me happy just to be alive."
"Ooh, ooh, makes me happy just to be alive
Ooh, ooh, makes me happy just to be alive
Ooh, ooh, makes me happy just to be alive
Ooh, ooh, makes me happy just to be alive."

The last note faded away, and all that could be heard was the sound of a woman sobbing in the darkness for things lost and things never known.

Chapter Sixteen: House Azkaban

Harry scowled at his scrambled eggs. He hated scrambled eggs. Why was he even having scrambled eggs?

Ah, yes, that was why. Because today was the day. That goddamn, godforsaken evil day when he would have to go to the hell called Hogwarts. There was a huge thunderstorm outside, and he was eating scrambled eggs.

Perfect.

He looked up and scowled as Nimi walked in, smiling. "Good morning!"

"What's so good about it?" he muttered.

"Well, for one, there's a thunderstorm going on! And for another, I get to finally see the whole of this hell on earth you've described in such great detail! And- oh crap, are those scrambled eggs?"

Harry couldn't help it; he burst out laughing at the look on her face. "Have I found another egg-hater?"

She nodded furiously. "Oh, yes. They're fiine baked into things, but by themselves..." She shuddered. "Why are you eating them if you hate them?"

He shrugged. "Hatred seemed to fit the day."

"Ahh," she said knowingly, and then shrugged. "Well, I can certainly understand you not wanting to go back there, to see them again, but at least they won't be in the same year as you or know you're you, right?"

"Right," he conceded. "But my- well, I suppose she's my ex, she broke up with me after one date because she thought I fancied someone else... I don't like her anymore, but she's a Seventh Year, so that will be rather awkward."

She shrugged again. "Well, like I said, she won't know you're you."

He groaned and put his head on his arms. "I know, it's just... memories, I suppose."

She opened her mouth to say something, but Sirius walked in at that moment, looking unbelievably grim. (He nodded to the two of them and poured himself a cup of coffee from the caraffe on the counter. "Morning," he grunted, sitting down at the table. They nodded to him.

Slowly, the others filed in, and all too soon, it was time to leave. Harry shot the castle one last longing glance before stepping into the carriage with a heavy sigh and shutting the door behind him.

No one spoke on the ride to Hogwarts; there wasn't really anything to say that hadn't been said already. When the carriage stopped, Harry took a shaky breath and Sirius put his arm around him. "It'll be okay, Prongslet," he said softly. "It doesn't seem like it now, and believe me I of all people understand, but someday, it'll be alright."

Harry nodded, his throat too tight to speak. He opened the door, took a deep breath, and stepped out. To his surprise and disgust, the entire school was arranged outside, much as they had been for the Tri-Wizard Tournament. They looked to him, obviously expecting him to say something. He decided to make it brief and to the point.

"You can all go inside. There is absolutely nothing important happening here, as Professor Dumbledore will kindly be showing us to our Common Room."

A muttering burst out but Professor Dumbledore merely stepped forward, eyes twinkling. "A pleasure to have you here, Lord Azkaban. Your Common Room is this way."

Harry nodded, and slowly followed Dumbledore, ignoring the stares and whispers sent in his direction. He was used to it after being the Boy-Who-Lived, but it was new to him as the Lord Azkaban.

Dumbledore led them through hallways and towards, Harry noted with a silent groan, his office. And, sure enough, just about a hundred feet away from the entrance to his office he stopped in front of a suit of armor.

“Password?” the suit said with a clank.

Dumbledore turned to Harry, and he decided that it wanted him to make one up. A smirk present on his face, he responded with “Betrayers will fall.”

The suit of armor nodded and as Dumbledore cast him a curious look he entered the small tunnel that had been revealed to the Common Room.

It was apparent their house colors were black and silver at first glance. The layout of the room was nearly identical to that of the Gryffindor Common Room, but there were six doors instead of two stairs. A fire roared in the fireplace and silver furniture rested in front of it.

Harry turned to Dumbledore and nodded. “This is fine, Mr. Dumbledore.”

Dumbledore nodded and swept out of the room. Sirius opened his mouth, but Harry held up a hand and performed a quick Sweeping Hex that disabled any and all forms of spells or devices in the room that would report what was going on. He then nodded to Sirius.

Sirius laughed. “I was about to ask you to do that.” Everyone else laughed as well, the tension of the day so high tht any small relief was... well, a relief.

“What do we have first?” Harry asked.

“Defense Against the Dark Arts in an hour,” Nimi replied, “With Professor Arabella Figg.”

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

“I want to go home.”

It was said in a voice bland and devoid of emotion with a hint of dry humor and a tad of sorrow in it. Which in itself was odd coming from Arianrhod Lupin. But the really odd thing was her words. Although it

was no secret that she wanted out of there, she rarely complained; she accepted the cards life had dealt her. Or so Mel had thought.

"I do too, Ari... what's wrong?"

Ari sighed heavily. "It's his birthday today. We should be there, throwing him a surprise party, annoying the chap out of him... But, instead, we're stuck here. Mel, I just want *out!*"

She sighed heavily. "I know. Same here. And there's nothing we can do... Nothing at all."

Ari, her face full of pain, just shook her head and began to sob silently. And Mel knew there would be nothing she could do for her friend, for she could not free them any more than Ari could.

They were trapped.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

Harry walked into N.E.W.T. Defense Against the Dark Arts, ignoring the looks of awe and caution he received from the members of all four of the other houses present. As so few students signed up for N.E.W.T. Level classes, it had long ago been decided that it would be better to just have them all combined into one class.

He sat down in a seat near the back of the room; Luna, Nikolai, and Nimi followed suit, and Sirius and Remus sat silently in two chairs at the very back, up against the wall. They looked ominously at the students as they came in, who gulped and went to their seats, not seeing Sirius and Remus snigger behind their backs.

"Alright, class," Arabella- no, Professor Figg said as the bell rang. "We have several new students today, as I'm sure you've noticed- there were a few mild laughs at this "- and I'll have them introduce themselves now, as I don't know their names."

Harry mentally chuckled. So Dumbledore had assigned her to try and find out his name. Well, she wouldn't have an easy time of it. He motioned to Nimi to start.

She stood and automatically assumed the Azkabanian position of attention- arms bent at the elbow and hands clasping the opposite forearms behind her back. “High War Admiral and Primary Advisor to the Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles Nimi Stardreamer.” She sat down in a fluid motion and crossed her arms over her chest.

Without prompting, Nikolai stood next, hands on his desk and leaning forward slightly. “Liason to the Azkabanians to the Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles Nikolai Nadreski.”

Luna stood, smiling eerily beneath her hood, which, like all of the others’, was pulled high. “Secondary Advisor to the Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles Luna Lovegood.”

And finally, Harry stood, arms crossed and a smirk present on his features. “I am the Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles- if you wish to adress me, you may call me Lord Azkaban, or Azkaban I suppose if you want to be casual. Although with them around-“ he jerked his head at Sirius and Remus “-I wouldn’t recommend it.”

He sat back down, arms still crossed and smirk still present, though it had turned rather victorious at Figg’s look of disappointment.

“Right,” she said to cover the awkward silence that had sprung up, “Today we’ll be studying the Patronus. Does anyone in here know how to produce one?” Several people rasied their hands, Harry unthinkingly among them, and she said “Well, Lord Azkaban, why don’t you give it a go?”

Harry stared at her in horror, thinking to himself ‘Oh crap.’ Who wouldn’t understand who he was after seeing his Patronus? But it was too late to back out now; everyone had seen him raise his hand, and the Professor was motioning him to the front.

With a heavy heart, he walked forward and pointed at nothing in particular, picturing the spell in his mind. ‘Expecto Patronum...’

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Albus Dumbledore frowned at the Scrying Glass he had set up to work in the Azkaban Common Room. Nothing happened.

Apparently the Lord Azkaban had gotten rid of his Scrying Spell and changed the password to his Common Room so that he, Dumbledore, could not enter. The suit of armor wouldn't give him the password either, saying only that the Lord Azkaban had told him to give the password to no one, including the Headmaster.

But why? Why did the boy hate him so much? He had mentioned something at their first meeting about locking Sirius away, and he had resented being advised by him... but that wasn't enough for this, surely?

So what was?

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourconqueror**

To his shock and the shock of everyone in the room who knew what his Patronus should have been, it was not a silver stag, but a large silver bear-like dog highly resembling a Grim.

Sirius.

The aforementioned wizard watched in shock as his Animagus form, albeit silvery and slightly see-through, pranced around the room, thoroughly enjoying the awe of the students.

Harry was frantically running through every text he had ever read on Patroni in his mind until it finally came to him. Something Lupin had said once when he asked why his Patronus was a stag.

"A Patronus takes the form of that we associate most with safety, Harry. We can tell ourselves whatever we want, but subconsciously whatever you trust the most to protect you will in the form of a Patronus."

So, now he thought to Sirius more for protection than his father? He supposed, in a roundabout way, that made sense. He hadn't used his Patronus since the Department of Mysteries, and that was when

Sirius had come to fight and fallen through the Veil because he had known that he, Harry, was in danger... And as much as it hurt to admit it, for he did love his father, he thought of Sirius more like a father than he did of James, mainly because Sirius had been there for him and James, certainly not of his own free will, had not...

He was brought out of his reverie as Figg cleared her throat. In surprise, he whirled and lost his concentration on the Patronus, which faded with one last tail wag. "Well," Figg said, clearly surprised, "It seems that our Lord Azkaban has a Grim for a Patronus. Would you care to share why?"

Harry covered up his relief on her not knowing Sirius' Animagus form by scowling at her. "No. It's personal."

And that was the end of that.

The next class was, to Nimi's horror, Home Economics. Sirius approached Harry on the way.

"Pro- Lord Azkaban," he asked quietly, "I thought that your Patronus was your father?"

Harry nodded slowly. "So did I." He sighed and shook his head. "Can we- can we talk later? Because it'll take a bit of explaining..."

His godfather nodded. "Of course."

Harry shot him a grateful smile before walking in to Home Economics, the entire group sitting much the same as they had in the last class. People whispered and stared at him as they entered, once again much the same as the last class, and then a girl with cropped black hair and almond-shaped eyes walked in.

Cho.

Crap.

She smiled flirtatiously at him and gave him a small wave before sitting down, and to his relief his heart stayed still in his chest and all

he felt was disgust. He didn't know what he would do if he liked her again.

The Professor, who turned out to be the Astronomy teacher Sinistra, swept in and stood in front of her desk. "Right," she said briskly. "Today we'll be continuing our cooking unit with pretzels. I have the recipes set out along with everything you'll need. Any questions?" No one said anything. "Very well. I'll be walking around; if you've got any questions, call me over. The Azkaban group will be at station five; they're all labeled. Go."

Without a word, the students got up and began to move to their stations. Everything went well except for one group; someone had left cinnamon sugar in the oven and when the group opened it, smoke wafted up and towards the school's fire alarm. Some idiot Ravenclaw stood and tried to bat it away with a book before the Professor just used magic to vanish it.

The class was over quickly and as they walked out of the room Nimi sighed with joy and twirled around in a circle. Harry raised an eyebrow, and she raised hers in return. "What? Baaaad Home Ec. experience; you don't want to know." Judging from the look on her face, he decided that he really didn't.

So in short, everything was going fine until Harry collapsed a few seconds after walking into their Common Room, holding his scar.

Chapter Seventeen: Slayer of Deserving, Protector of Innocent

Hermione ran towards the redhead. "Ron! RON!"

The lanky boy finally heard her and turned around. "Wa'issit, Hermione?"

"Ron!" she gasped out, panting from running up the stairs. "You have to come, they've called a meeting..."

Ron nodded, knowing immediately that she was talking about the Order. "Let's go."

Since Sirius' return, Grimmauld Place had refused to allow them in, so they had been holding meetings in the Room of Requirement. Cautiously walking down the fifth floor hallway they came to the portrait that now covered the entrance. "Dumbledore's Army," she said, the whispered password heard by only her and her companion.

The portrait hole swung open, and they stepped into the bustle. Dumbledore was talking to Snape and McGonagall on the stage and everyone else was chattering, running back and forth to grab people to pull into their conversations. At that moment, Snape and McGonagall left the stage and headed for their seats, and Dumbledore yelled for quiet.

Silence immediately fell, and Ron and Hermione made their way to their seats. "Welcome, everyone," Dumbledore said, his voice booming. "I am afraid that the discussion at this meeting is both good... and bad." Whispers began, but quiet fell again when the head of the Order raised his hand. "My first piece of news is this... and it is hard for me to say this, for no matter what he did, we all looked up to him in a way... Harry Potter died this morning in Azkaban Prison due to Dementors."

Hermione felt her mouth go dry and her eyes widen. 'He deserved it,' she thought to herself. 'If anyone deserved it, it was him.'

The noise in the room took almost five minutes to quiet this time. When it was quiet, Dumbledore spoke once more. "That was the somewhat bad news. Now for the good. The only reason we wished

to prevent Mr. Potter's death was due to a prophecy that made us believe he was the only one capable of beating the Dark Lord. A new prophecy has been called into question though." Picking up a scroll and adjusting his glasses, he cleared his throat and began to read.

"The Heir of the Six approaches, so all of the Darkness take heed. The Heir of the Six approaches, the Light, fall down on your knees. Of fire, water, earth, and sun, of light and darkness, Evil run. Of all the great that come before, the Heir of the Six shall soon come forth. Of brav'ry, knowledge, trust, and sly, of love and hat'r'd, spells shall fly. Of all the great that come before, the Heir of the Six shall soon come forth. The Heir of the Six approaches, so all of the Darkness take heed. The Heir of the Six approaches, the Light, fall down on your knees."

There was silence in the room for a moment until, predictably-

"Who's the Heir of the Six?"

Dumbledore nodded to her. "No one knows who exactly the Heir of the Six is, but prophecies have been made about them for generations. They are the first to hold the blood of the six greatest wizards and witches of all time- Merlin, Hufflepuff, Slytherin, Ravenclaw, Gryffindor, and LeFay- and are, in their own right, more powerful than the six of those combined. He is, in theory, the one who can destroy Voledmort once and for all."

"But wouldn't one of their parents have had the blood of all six then?"

Hermione shook her head at the redhead next to her and sighed. "Honestly Ron, sometimes I wonder about you... One of their parents would have the blood of some of them, and the other the rest."

The leader nodded again. "Precisely, Miss Granger. The bloodlines have been lost over the years, and as such we have no way of showing who the Heir of the Six is; we can only wait for them to reveal their power."

"How long will that take?" This was Kingsley Shacklebolt.

Dumbledore shrugged helplessly. "I do not know, but we can only hope, Kingsley, that it will be soon. For the sake of us all."

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

"Harry," Nimi cried urgently, shaking him. "Harry!" There was no reply. All he did was moan and clutch his scar tighter. "What is it?"

"Voldemort," Sirius said, devoid of tone or expression. "He has a connection to Harry through the scar. He's sending him a vision. Harry said he was working on Occlumency- Voldemort must be using just about all of his power to send this if Harry can't fight him off. All we can do is wait it out."

At that moment Harry sat up, gasping for breath, eyes wide. "What happened," Nimi said instantly, kneeling next to him.

"He's attacking Diagon Alley."

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourconqueror

They had arrived at the battle that would go down in history as the Fight for Diagon Alley at exactly 2:07:43 PM.

At exactly 2:19:14 PM, it was over.

Since Harry had discovered a cure for lycanthropy, over 200 werewolves had come to reside on Azkaban Isle. With the enhanced strength and senses that remained even after being administered the antidote, the ones that had joined up were a great asset to the Militia.

Exactly 189 of them had joined, and the rest had been either too old, pregnant, or had extenuating circumstances. All who hadn't joined had expressed their wish that they could.

The history books would describe the battle as both the quickest, and most impressive in wizarding history. Until that time which the Azkabanians showed up, the witches and wizards of Diagon Alley were failing horribly. Not only had about 300 of the Dark Lord's Death

Eaters Apparated in, they had brought with them two mountain trolls and at least 200 vampires. Not to mention all of the backup that came pouring in from the entrance to Knocturn Alley.

Anti-Apparation and Portkey wards were in place. Anyone who tried to fly away would be shot down. The entrances were blocked, and communications were down. They had thought they were done for. As one woman had eloquently put it: "Holy shit. We're screwed. God, don't let me die a virgin." Her boyfriend had immediately proceeded to snog her.

The magic folk had fought back valiantly, but they just weren't trained to handle an attack like this, and the few who were couldn't do much by themselves.

But then the Azkabanians came.

Several sayings would be prominent in the future, after this war. Things that wouldn't have been heard very often before it. Instead of "By Merlin!", "By Azkaban!" Whenever someone was foolish, "What a fudge." And when people were praying for a miracle, "All we can do is hope Azkaban comes." This battle started these things.

It was quite a spectacular entrance. That, every historian agreed on. The brick wall leading from the Leaky Cauldron was smashed open with such force that a brick flew 300 feet and up one of the trolls noses. The troll blinked, and then continued to smash things. Apparently, the brick was smaller and a more comfortable size than usual troll boogers.

A single figure had ridden out of the dust first, according to eyewitness accounts. He rode a Threstral, though after that day almost all in the Alley could see it. He reigned the Threstral and sat tall on its back, the horse facing sideways but the rider's head turned to the currently still (except for the trolls) battle.

The rider slowly held up a hand, a hand with a glowing silver rune. The Rune of Azkaban. "I will not have the blood of innocents stain this ground today more than it already has, Dark Ones," he said, his voice so cold it sent shivers down the spines of all listening. Eyewitnesses say even the trolls. "Let's move!" he called behind him,

and wheeling his horse to face front he charged into the battle with an inhuman cry.

Here is where accounts deviate. Everyone agrees on all the rider did during the battle, but not in what order. Some say that the first thing was felling the troll with a blast of red light, causing it too fall backwards and smash a legion of vampires. Others say that the first thing was cutting of the vampire leader's head with his own sword. Still more claim it was Stunning Bellatrix Lestrangle and hanging her by her underwear from the top of the awning of Florean Fortesque's Ice Cream Parlor using Permanent Sticking Charms.

But all agree that while he did these things, it was the woman who had ridden in after him who had the greatest number of defeated opponents. She showed mercy in that she never killed the humans, only the vampires for there was no way to Stun them, but other than that, you did not want to cross her. She was quick with a wand and knew her spells well, and seemed to have an infinite number of swords and daggers hidden upon her person. Her favorite to use appeared to be a light, well-balanced sword with an intricately wrought white gold handle and words up the side. The words were, according to the only one who had seen them and lived to tell the tale, for he had been there when she had killed a vampire with it, were "If Heaven shall welcome you, you will not die by this blade; but for those who Hell longs to embrace, this end is yours."

The historians had known her name, and it was recorded in all books as Nimi Stardreamer, but she was more often known by the title given to her; Slayer of Deserving. That was to become famous in the future as well; magical mothers whose children had been bad would often frighten them with tales of how, if they weren't little angels, the Slayer of Deserving would come and get them. Good children were told of how the Protector of Innocent would always watch over them, for that was what Luna became known as.

She had discovered a talent for healing a few years ago, apparently, and during the battle she had not only healed the injured but protected them ferociously. If a Death Eater came within twenty feet of an injured person Luna would hex them from where they were standing till kingdom come, wherever the hell that was. One old man

had this to say in an interview later: "She was like an angel. I was dying, I know I was. They had hit me with some sort of hex in the stomach and I was bleeding. I couldn't get up. But she came running over all o' a sudden, and she had her blonde hair flying behind her and her blue eyes were a' sparklin'- I thought for sure I was in heaven. And then, and then she healed me, and I knew that there were angels on earth."

Sirius and Remus had done well for themselves as well; they had helped lead the Militia, though that was mostly Nimi's duty to do so, to victory and as they put it "Kicked some slimy Death Eater scumbutts!"

When the battle was over, the damage was great. The win was obvious and undeniable; several Death Eaters had been killed, though not many; Peter Pettigrew had joined Bellatrix Lestrange in hanging from his underwear from the ice cream parlor hanging; the trolls were both dead, along with all the vampires and the several Death Eaters mentioned before.

On their side, the losses had been great, but mostly of those who had died before the Azkabanians had arrived; 137 witches and wizards, including Florean Fortesque and the desk clerk at Flourish and Blotts had been the civilian casualties; only 4 Azkabanian soldiers had died, and Harry had made a special point of putting it on his to-do list to get special permission to leave the school to visit the families of the fallen. Nikolai had, to his disappointment, been kept on the Isle for the course of the battle, both to coordinate defense from the surviving strongpoints of the Alley with a complex spell and to keep him safe, as he had never dueled before and it was doubtful he would have done well. In short, he was fine, and as General Azback was as well, all of the current Council was alive and kicking.

And Dumbledore was, to say the least, furious.

"Not only do you, four enrolled students and two allowed bodyguards, sneak off-campus during school hours, you do not inform me of an attack on Wizarding Society!"

Harry stood and looked at the Headmaster. It was the day after the attack, and on Harry's return to the school Dumbledore had promptly

dragged him into his office and began to yell. It was Harry's turn now. "First off, I did not sneak. I am a Lord, and Lords do not sneak. I strolled. I walked. That's the truth, Albus, be the man and face it. Your security is a pile of *shit*. They didn't bother to stop, as you put it, four enrolled students and two allowed bodyguards from walking straight off campus during school hours. And secondly, as for the attack, I saw no reason to tell you as, for one, with your *fabulous* Order you should have known and, for two, Azkaban could handle it on its own.

"You blame me for going to help when you yourself did not know? You're only pissed that I somehow managed to find out about it when you could not. You want to take the credit, Dumbledore, and don't deny it. You want to be able to take it rightfully, to be the one who did the fighting, but if you have to you'll say that you begged me to go, only to have the Wizarding World look up to you, worship you. Because you're as bad as Tom Riddle, Dumbledore. You want power. That's all you want, power. Well, you can take your goddamn power and rot in hell, because power is not all its cracked up to be. With power comes the ability to help or harm people, and with those come the responsibility to do so.

"So choose your side, Albus Dumbledore. Before Fate intervenes and chooses it for you."

And with that, he swept out of the office and towards the Azkaban Common Room, leaving two impressed bodyguards, three smug students, and one headmaster too shocked to even offer lemon drops.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourconqueror

"I need to sing."

Mel stared at her. "Now that, was pretty damn random."

"Not really. It calms me down, lets me release emotions."

Mel nodded. "It's the same for me. What do you want to sing?"

Ari bit her lip. "That's just the thing... I have no bloody idea."

The other woman nodded thoughtfully. “Well, there’s a really good muggle song by Rufus Wainwright, it’s titled ‘Hallelujah’... do you know it?”

“Yes, I love that song.” Without further ado, they began.

“I heard there was a secret chord

That David played and it pleased the Lord

But you don’t really care for music do you

It goes like this, the fourth, the fifth

The minor fall, the major lift

The baffled king composing Hallelujah.

Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujha.

Your faith was strong but you needed proof

You saw her bathing on the roof

Her beauty in the moonlight overthrew you

She tied you to a kitchen chair

She broke your throne, and she cut your hair

And from your lips she drew the Hallelujah...

Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Halleljuah.

Maybe I’ve been here before

I know this room, I’ve walked this floor

I used to live alone before I knew you

I’ve seen your flag on the marble arch

Love is not a vict'ry march

It's a cold and it's a broken Hallelujah.

Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah,

Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah.

There was a time you let me know

What's true and going on below

But now you never show it to me, do you

I remember when I moved in you

Your Holy Dark was moving too

And every breath we drew was Hallelujah.

Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah.

Maybe there's a god above

But all I ever learned from love

Was how to shoot at someone who outdrew you

It's not a cry you can hear at night

It's not somebody who's seen the light

It's a cold and it's a broken Hallelujah.

Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah."

"I will say that someday," Mel said suddenly, breaking the silence.

"One day, I will have cause to say that."

"Say what?"

"Hallelujah."

Chapter Eighteen: Dueling and Patroni

“Harry,” Sirius asked him once the others had rejoined him in their Common Rooms, “You said you’d tell me about the Patronus?”

“Right,” Harry said with a heavy sigh, settling down on the couch. “The rest of you can listen too, if Sirius doesn’t mind.” His godfather nodded his consent, and everyone sat to listen. “Well, for the first part of my life, until I was thirteen, I didn’t even know I had a godfather. No one had seen fit to tell me, probably because they thought you guilty, Sirius. So when I pictured someone coming to take me away from the Dursley’s, or to act as a parent and care about me, it was always my mum or dad having ended up being alive somehow, or some other obscure relative. But anyways, it became my parents that I associated most with protection.

“That’s what a Patronus is; that which you feel will protect you the most. Mine was my father’s animagus form, Prongs, because there was an equal chance between it being him and it being my mother. After Third Year, when I knew about you Sirius, we still didn’t have a chance to get to know each other super well because the Bumbling-Bee decided that I had to stay with the Dursley’s because of the stupid blood protection.

“But then came the Department of Mysteries, and- and the Veil. The way I see it, this is what happened; you, a man that had his freedom on the line, was willing to be caught and die being thought guilty to come and save me, who had grown up being told he was a worthless freak. That meant a lot to me. And then you did ‘die’, you feel through the Veil, and it was as though you had sacrificed yourself to me. You were willing to die without being a free man just for me. You protected me.

“I haven’t used my Patronus since that day; the only times I’ve faced Dementors was in Azkaban, and then I was passed out most of the time and when I was awake didn’t have a wand. Yesterday was the first time I’ve used a Patronus since the Department of Mysteries, and thinking about it I’m not at all surprised it’s you Sirius. It should be you.”

Without a word, Sirius pulled him into a hug. No words needed to be said; they all understood.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

“What do we have first today?”

Harry looked at his schedule as they walked through the hallways. “Let’s see... Ah, here we go. We have Dueling first, followed by N.E.W.T. Transfiguration. Dueling is being held in the... WHAT IN THE NINE LEVELS OF HELL!”

The others hurried over to look at the schedule, and while Nimi and Nikolai were confused, Luna’s eyes widened, Remus stared at the paper as though willing it to be a typo, and Sirius- well, Sirius fainted.

“The Chamber of Secrets?” Nimi asked confusedly. “What’s so important about that?”

“You have to be a Parselmouth to open it,” Harry said softly, “Which means, as I highly doubt that they’ve asked Voldemort, there’s a new Parselmouth in the school.”

“Indeed there is, Lord Azkaban,” came a voice from behind him and Harry whirled, pointing his wand at the figure, “Me.” The boy extended a hand that Harry warily shook. “Name’s Zabini. Blaise Zabini.”

Harry nodded. “You obviously know mine, as you’ve already called me by it.” he then paused. He remembered the name Zabini from his Sorting. “Aren’t you a Sixth Year, Mr. Zabini?”

The boy nodded. “Yes; they just have me open the Chamber before every lesson. I don’t actually participate in the class.” By now Sirius was awake and standing behind Harry with his arms crossed. “I had better be going, Mr. Zabini, or I’ll be late. Is it open yet?”

Blaise nodded, bid him goodbye, and headed off to his class as Harry, Nimi, Nikolai, and Luna went to their own, Remus and Sirius following behind.

“Lord Azkaban?” Nimi asked him.

“Yes?”

“Where and what exactly is this Chamber of Secrets?”

Harry sighed. “You remember whhat I told you about the girl and the diary? This is the place where it happened.”

“Ahhh,” Nimi said understandingly. “You ready to go back there?”

Harry sighed. “I don’t know. I never thought I would have to.” A look of determination fixed itself on his face. “But I have to prepare myself for this war, and if this is what it takes, so be it.”

Nimi nodded. “If that is your decision, my Lord. Let’s go.”

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

“Alright,” the man said, throwing his cloak on a chair and striding onto the dueling platform, “For those who don’t know me, my name’s Alexander Smith and I’m the Duealing Professor. I’m a retired Auror, fought in the first war against You-Know-Who. Here in Dueling, we deal in levels. You fight others at your level until you beat them all, then move on to the next level. Level One is the highest, Level Twenty the lowest. I’ll be testing you four-“ he pointed to Harry and the other Azkabanian students “-to find out your level. The rest of you, go ahead and start.”

The rest of the students partnered up and duels began as the teacher made his way over to Harry. “Lord Azkaban,” he said calmnly nce he had reached them. “You and your friends’ duels with me will be on the platform; that’s what it’s there for. Who’s going first?”

Nimi stepped forward. “I am.”

Professor Smith nodded. “Alright. Let’s go.”

Without a word, Niim walked over to the stage after the Professor. Once they were standing on the platform, they bowed and then

moved to their respective positions. “Three, two, one,” counted off Smith, and in a split second they were moving.

“Expelliarmus!” cried out Smith, and Nimi rolled forward to avoid it before standing and shooting of a returning spell.

“Stupefy!” Her return hex was avoided as well, and that was when the battle truly began.

“Impedementa!”

“Protego! Inflammegra!”

“Protego Inferno! Liquis!”

“Protego Aquarius! Impermius! Petrificus Totalis!”

“Protego Finite! Stupefy!”

“Protego Supreme! Rictusempra!”

“Protego Maxime! Petrificus Totalis Maxime!” And with that, the duel was over. Nimi didn’t fall over, but remained standing, frozen, glaring at Professor Smith, who in short order removed the curse, nodding thoughtfully. “Very good, very good. I assume you have some training in this?”

She nodded, still glaring at him. “Yes.” She didn’t elaborate.

“Right. Well, I think that that places you at Level Four. We’ll wait and see what your friends get before I set you up in a duel, because we already had an even number on Four, I think. Who’s next?”

Luna was. She and Nikolai both ended up with Level Seven, and then it was Harry’s turn. They bowed, and retreated to their positions, and the duel began.

“Stupefy!”

“Protego Maxime! Expelliarmus!”

“Protego! Diffindo!”

“Expelliarmus! Protego! Diffindo! Rictusempra! Inflammegra!”

Professor Smith barely managed to dodge the onslaught of attacks. “Petrificus Totalis Maxima!”

“Protego Maxima! Expelliarmus!”

“Petrificus Totalis Maxima! Petrificus Totalis Maxima!” Harry dodged the first attack, but the second one he couldn’t manage to avoid. Smith hurriedly canceled the hex. “Excellent, excellent! I think I’ll place you at Four; you would be well matched with this young lady here,” he nodded to Nimi. “So, why don’t you all get started-“ he was cut off as the bell rang. “Well, I guess you know what you’ll be doing next time. To get out, you just go to those carpets there; they’ll transport you to the hallway outside the Great Hall. See you Wednesday!”

Harry shook his head at the man’s departing back. “He is far too happy,” he muttered.

Nimi snorted. “Right you are on that one. Stupid bastard- he’s working for the Headmaster too.”

“What makes you say that?” Harry asked curiously.

“You didn’t notice how he was ‘oh so innocently’ inquiring about me? And then Nikolai too? He already knows about Luna, of course. Like when he asked me if I had done this before? he wanted me to say where.”

“Ahh.” Harry said, understanding and oh-so-slightly furious. “So now that he can’t find out anything about me, he wants to find out about you lot?”

She nodded. “Precisely.”

Harry growled. “Stupid bastard.” He turned slightly so he could address all three of them. “Whatever you do, I don’t want them to find out about you anymore than they already do.” The other three nodded dutifully and they made their way to the carpets.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

“Hey, Moony?” Sirius asked Remus as they walked through the hallways, following Harry to his next class.

“Yes?”

“Have you noticed anything between our favorite Lord Azkaban and the girl with the really long title?”

Remus looked at them; they were laughing, along with Luna and Nikolai, just like normal teens. “Not really. But now that you mention it...” He paused. “It’s kind of like- like the Lord’s parents, isn’t it? Sort of the whole ‘friends before anything more’ deal?”

Sirius nodded. “I was thinking the same thing. I don’t think they realize it yet, though.”

Remus nodded thoughtfully. “The Lovegood girl does, though. I don’t know if they ever mentioned it, but they went as ‘friends’ to a ball the night we got you back. That was where we left from. Actually, it was Nimi who figured out about the Veil... but anyways. I overheard Luna and Nimi talking, and Luna was teasing her about Harry. Neither of them just wants to admit they like each other yet, I think.”

“And maybe they don’t,” Sirius added in. “Maybe we’re just reading the signs wrong. But they really do seem like they would be a good match, don’t they?”

“Yes, mate, they do.”

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

Mel was bored.

No, scratch that. She was bored stiff. She was trying to burn a hole through the wall yet again and trying to ignore Ari asking her if she had perpetual PMS. Actually, she was doing pretty well on the wall;

there were quite a few scorch marks already. It was handy to have mild Fire Elemental traits in your family; great stress reliever.

Which really made it too bad that Malfoy knew about it and had given both her and Ari fire-proof chains. Otherwise, they would have been out of here long ago. A long, long time ago.

It really was too bad that Malfoy was as smart as he was. Of course, he had always had a grudge against her for not agreeing to go out with him, and then marrying his cousin in law... And what she had said to him that day she still remembered, for she taunted him with it whenever she could...

“Sirius Black is a better man than you’ll ever be, Lucius Malfoy, and the day I go out with you will be the day your Master admits that he’s a bloody halfblood hypocrite.”

Harsh words, but true.

And then there was the fact that he had only wanted to be with her to spite Sirius because he had known just how much Sirius cared for her.

Yeah. She would never date that man.

She thought back to how she and Sirius had first become friends. Bellatrix had cursed her, and she was in the Hospital Wing unconscious...

..Flashback:

She blinked her eyes open and stared at the ceiling, too tired to do much else. It was white. She had a feeling that if it weren’t so dark, the color would be bright enough to hurt her eyes.

She looked around, and decided that she was in the Hospital Wing. Everything seemed to be in order... she was a bit tired, but other than that, she felt fine... and someone was holding her hand... Wait.

She turned to her right and was surprised... shocked would be a better word... to see none other than Sirius Black, the one that loved to call her “Snivelly’s girlfriend” and use her as a prank tester, snoring

in the chair next to her bed and holding her hand, looking as though he had been there for a long while. She must have squeezed his hand for a moment in her surprise, because he started awake.

“Mel!” He exclaimed, and that was even odder, for he never referred to her by her given name. “You’re awake! You’ve been out for three days, everyone’s been so worried...”

“What are you playing at Black?” she asked, but there was no venom in her voice, merely curiosity. “What happened to ‘Snively’s girlfriend’?”

He winced. “Look... about that... Bellatrix-“ the name was spat out like a curse “-accidently told me everything.”

“Everything?”

“Yeah... the whole you not agreeing with your family about Voldemort, and leaving... And how Snape is your cousin, not your boyfriend... she said I was an idiot for not realizing it... And I just wanted to apologize, for judging you before I knew you.”

She stared at him. “Who are you and what have you done with Sirius Black?” Then she smiled. “I accept your apology. What say we just... start over?”

He nodded, and held out his right hand to her. “Sirius Black. A pleasure to meet you.”

She shook it with her left hand. “Meliara Fillibuster. The same.”

That was when he realized he was holding her other hand and let go of it, blushing. There was a silence for a moment before he changed the subject. “So, you like Quidditch?”

“Are you kidding? Quidditch is the best! I like Chaser best myself...”

∴End Flashback∴

They had been friends ever since that, and eventually something more. And the most ironic thing of all was she had Bellatrix Lestranger

to thank for it; the Bellatrix Lestrange who had captured her in the first place; the Bellatrix Lestrange her husband was ashamed to call a cousin. That was a highly disturbing thought.

She decided to concentrate on the wall again.

Chapter Nineteen: The Order of Things

“Lord Azkaban!”

Harry whirled around to see none other than Hermione Granger running after him. He froze. She looked no different than she had those months ago at his trial- well, if you didn't count the lack of expression of betrayal and fury. He tuned back into her rant just as it reached “-name's Hermione Granger, Lord Azkaban, honored to meet you.” She held out her hand.

He stared at it for a moment before nodding to her. “I see you already know who I am, Miss Granger. Pleasure to have met you.” Without another word he spun on his heel and continued to walk down the hallway, leaving one steaming Gryffindor Sixth Year behind him.

“How rude!” she exclaimed to Ron, who had walked up beside her. “He barely even spoke to me, and then just left! How are we supposed to get the information he wants if the Lord Azkaban won't even speak to me!”

Ron shrugged. “I dunno, 'Mione. Maybe he'll talk to me. I'll try later. For now, though, do you want to be late to Defense Against the Dark Arts?”

“Oh no!” she shrieked, running off down the corridor. “Hurry, Ron!”

Shaking his head, he ran after her.

Harry, in the meantime, had made his way to the Hospital Wing for Healing, which turned out to be a rather unpopular class. Other than him, Nikolai, Luna, and Nimi there were only three other students in it, all of them Hufflepuff girls that seemed to be best friends.

Nimi walked over to him as Madame Pomfrey continued to lecture on Dreamless Sleep Potion. “Where were you?” she whispered when she reached him. “Your bodyguards were just about out of their minds! One second you were there, the next you weren't!”

“Sorry,” he whispered back, “I must have gotten separated from you in the crowd. Then Hermione tried to talk to me... I think she and Ron have been inducted into the Order.”

“What makes you say that? It wouldn’t surprise me, as from what you’ve said they’d gotten chummy with Dumbledore before your trial, but did she say something?”

“No, just the way she was looking at me, really; like she was waiting for me to tell her some kind of secret or something. Like the rest of the Order has been.”

Nimi nodded thoughtfully. “Makes sense.” She didn’t have a chance to say more as Pomphrey split them into groups and had them begin to brew the Dreamless Sleep potion.

Harry was partnered with one of the Hufflepuff girls, surely not by accident. Madame Pomfrey probably figured that if she forced them near each other he would open up to her eventually. He had three things to think to that: not bloody likely.

They finished the potion rather quickly, mainly because Harry had read so much on potions that summer, determined to bring up his grade. He mentally laughed thinking that six months ago he had been concerned with his grades, not knowing then that two months later he would be tried and sent to Azkaban. He had been an idiot.

So, for the rest of the class all there really was for him to do was work on the essay Professor Figg had assigned on Patroni.

‘Let’s see,’ he thought idly to himself, ‘a Patroni’s power centers around both the happiness of the memory used to cast it and the connection of the object it represents to the caster... that sounds pretty good... The stronger the memory, the stronger the Patronus... The Patronus will also be stronger if the caster either consciously or subconsciously puts much strength into the protection offered by what the Patronus represents... The Patronus will always take the form of that most associated with protection to the caster, but the stronger that link is, the stronger the Patronus... Perfect.’

He finished up the essay with a few scribbled sentences about famous Patroni, wandlessly and soundlessly cast a handwriting disguising charm on it, and pushed it back into his bag, sitting back, relaxed, until the bell rang.

HeroVilainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourconqueror

Ari reflected.

She wished that she had the mild elemental abilities Mel had, but unfortunately she wasn't a descendant of an illegal child of Godric Gryffindor, as Mel had found out she was in their Seventh Year. When she had announced that she would wed Sirius, he had been carefully checked to see if he was descended from any of the Six- but, alas, he was not. None of their children would be the Heir of the Six, for which they were somewhat grateful.

Mel had at one point confided to Ari that while she felt guilty for being unable to give the Wizarding World the Heir, she was glad that the responsibilities and attention as such wouldn't be pressed upon any of her children. Her descendants, no one was sure.

But if the Heir of the Six approached, as Mel had prophesized, did that mean that Mel's daughter would have a child with one that had the blood of the other Five in their veins? That was unlikely, she supposed, as Mel's daughter would be... fourteen now? Fifteen? But in prophecies, 'approaches' usually meant coming into power, and soon, which would mean that the Heir of the Six had probably already been born...

There was no use thinking on it. It just gave her a headache. A lot of things gave her headaches nowadays, light among them. It was so dark in the cell that on the few occasions they got to go outside, she was almost blinded, and even once she had adjusted her head hurt.

Thinking about Remus gave her a headache too. If he had moved on, that made her happy as long as she was in here; she was happy that he had found a way to be happy again. But if she escaped, she wouldn't be; she would pretend to be alright with it, but she would

probably move to America or somewhere and mope for the rest of her days.

And if he hadn't moved on; that was awful while she was in here. She didn't want him to cry over her; she hated the feeling that thinking her dead had hurt him. But if she got out- no, when she got out, for she was sure that someday she would. When she got out, if he was still single; she would be sad that he had been sad for so long, but glad that she could be with him once more...

And that thought gave her a headache as well. She loved him as much as she ever did, but what if, even if he hadn't moved on, he didn't love her any longer? What if he was over her? Would there be awkward silences, her being forced to sneak glances at him when he wasn't looking? Would things turn out that way?

Time would only tell, but how she wished she had a Tylenol.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Remus sighed heavily. Talking about James and Lily to Sirius earlier... no matter how brief it had been, it had still made him think of her. Of the one that time had left behind.

He remembered how her dark blonde hair would blow in the wind... how her blue eyes would shine when she laughed. He remembered finding her body, broken and bloody, on his front porch... their front porch, the one of the house they had picked out together, lived in together. He would have been hard pressed to say that he did not go mad then.

In fact, if it weren't for his friends he didn't doubt that he would be in St. Mungos right now. They were what had kept him from going completely off the deep end. James and Sirius had been extremely sympathetic as they knew that they would feel the same if they were put in his boat, and had been more than happy to be his drinking companions and make sure he didn't get *too* drunk.

Mel and Lily had been wonderful as well. They had lost a treasured friend; the three had been as close as sisters, but even through their

own pain they were always willing to help him out. Of course, soon after Ari Mel was captured, and Sirius was in his position and Lily was left as one of three.

And Peter... oh how he laughed at himself for not seeing it then. Peter had been just too sympathetic; he should have realized that as Peter had never had a steady girlfriend, let alone wife, he wouldn't really understand. Instead, he had thought Peter one of his best friends when really the rat had been at least partly responsible for her death.

He didn't even have the same luxury as Sirius did, thinking that there was a chance she was alive as Mel's body had never been found. No, Ari was dead, and there was no way to get her back, no matter how much he would wish to.

Despite all beliefs, while love could transcend time and space, it could not bring back the dead.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Mel looked to Ari, who was glaring at the wall. "Just not the same when you can't burn it, eh?"

Ari laughed softly. "Quite correct. Sometimes I really wish I was related to you in more than just our minds, Melly. Then I could burn things to a crisp too!"

Mel chuckled. "Yes, it really is so much fun. Do you remember when I first came here and set Lucy's undergarments on fire?"

The blonde sighed dreamily. "That shall forever be a Patronus worthy memory."

Both of them burst out laughing. "Ah, yes, I will forever remember him jumping around and shouting at Crabbe and Goye to put it out... and they, being the idiots they were, grabbing his butt..."

They dissolved into giggles once more. "And Narcissa coming down in the middle of it all and fainting?"

“Oh, she deserved that, stupid bitch.”

“Yep. Bet Lucy was sleeping on the couch that night!”

“Bet you’re right.”

She was.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

“Ah, Lord Azkaban.”

Harry turned and glared at Dumbledore. This was the second time this sort of thing had happened today, and he didn’t appreciate it. “What?”

“I need to speak to you and your bodyguards in my office right away.”

Harry mock bowed. “Of course, Headmaster. C’mon you two. Nimi, Nikolai, Luna... We don’t have any mpre classes today, so why don’t you head back to the Common Room. I’ll meet you there shortly.”

Nimi nodded. “Sounds good, Lord Azkaban. Luna, Nikolai... let’s get going.” With a parting glare at the Headmaster she turned and left, followed shortly by the other two leaving Harry, Sirius, and Remus on their own with Dumbledore.

“I see you’ve managed to rub your prejudices off on your friends, Lord Azkaban.”

“The same could be said for you, Headmaster. I absolutely love all of the questions the teachers are asking me- they’re lest subtle than stampeeding Hippogriffs. And Miss Granger- you might want to find someone better for that particular job.”

To say that Dumbodore was surprised would be an understatement- he had suspected that the Lord Azkaban would find out about at least some of the teachers, but he had thought that Miss Granger would be able to slip by his defences.

“Perhaps I will, Lord Azkaban, perhaps I will. In the meantime, my office?”

Harry nodded. “Of course, *sir*,” he said sarcastically. “Lead on.”

Once they were in the office, Harry was shocked and mildly horrified when Fawkes swooped down and landed on his arm. He would have thought that any pet of Dumbledore’s would hate him, but Fawkes merely let out a trill and rubbed his head against Harry’s cheek while Dumbledore looked on in awe.

“My phoenix, Fawkes... he’s been avoiding me since about four months ago, and now he’s making friends with a complete stranger...”

Harry mentally burst out into laughter; Fawkes was anything but a stranger to him. “I don’t know, Headmaster. Now, what did you wish to talk about?”

“I want to ask you once more to join the Order of the Phoenix Lord Azkaban, and I wish to ask Sirius and Remus to reconsider and rejoin.”

And all three of them burst out laughing. Sirius spoke first, and he spoke for all of them.

“Albus, I am pleased to tell you in no uncertain terms that we will never join the Order of the Phoenix.

“You need power too much, Albus. Power over the students of this school, power over the members of the Order... and now you are trying to gain power over the people of Azkaban. It will not happen, Albus. We will never agree to it.

“The Lord of Azkaban is more capable of leading this war than you ever will be, and he’s only sixteen. Do you know how many soldiers we lost at the Battle of Diagon Alley? Four. Four soldiers. That’s all. Albus, if you had been in charge of that battle we all might have died.

“You just want to get your claws into the Lord of Azkaban so that you can be in charge of everything, take all of the credit. I’m not saying

we want it- we don't care. But we know you do, and we don't give a damn about what you want.

"I found out about what you did, Albus. You were the one who pushed for me to have no trial, to just be sent off. And with you being you, they listenend to you, and I, an innocent man, was sent to hell.

"And then you don't even have the courtesy to apologize about it once you find out about said innocence- when I don't bring it up, you just go along as though it never happened. Well, it did happen Albus. You made a mistake. And you've made too many of them over the years."

It was at this point that Dumbledore spoke up for himself. "I do have something that I believe could easily change your mind, Sirius. You as well, Remus, and I don't doubt you'll bring the Lord of Azkaban along with you."

Sirius sneered and turned around, beginning to walk out the door and followed by Harry and Remus. "Oh yeah?" he called over his shoulder. "And what the hell might that be?"

Dumbledore's next words made both him and Remus freeze as though they had been hit by stray Petrificus Totalis hexes and turn a color so pale that it made Nearly Headless Nick look a bright pink.

"I know where Mel and Ari are."

Chapter Twenty: Mirages

While Remus remained frozen, Sirius slowly turned to stare at Dumbledore. "What did you say?" he whispered breathlessly.

"I know where Mel and Ari are."

"Ari's *dead*," Remus said, his voice choked with emotion. "I know you're upset since I didn't rejoin, but this is a tad harsh, don't you think?"

Dumbledore shook his head. "I assure you, Mr. Lupin, she's quite alive. I recently received information that she, along with Mel, are being held prisoner by Death Eaters. Apparently a Permanent Polyjuice Potion was used on the body of a muggle so that it could seem to be your wife."

Harry was more concerned with the falseness he had heard in Dumbledore's tone than with the other man's shock. "I do possess some skill at Legilimency," Harry said calmly, "But any fool with a modicum of talent at the subject would be able to tell that you are not telling the complete truth. Just how long have you had this information?"

Dumbledore's beard twitched, and Harry knew that he had hit the nail on the head with the hammer. "I am afraid that I am not at liberty-"

"How long, Dumbledore?" Sirius hissed angrily.

Dumbledore sighed. "I first found out that they may be prisoner some time ago, although I have looked into it since then. I knew their general location, but not precisely where to find them, and they are extremely well-hidden-"

Surprisingly, it was not Sirius but Remus who snapped. "Tell me!" Remus cried, suddenly leaning over Dumbledore's desk and staring the man straight in the eye.

The Headmaster of Hogwarts gulped. "I have known the fact that they are prisoners for... almost fifteen years now."

Remus' cry of anguish could be heard echoing around the school, and Sirius stared at the man in shock.

"Me I can understand," he whispered, "At least somewhat. I still had some hope. But Remus... Dumbledore, you let him blame himself for her death for fifteen years longer than he needed to."

"Don't you understand?" the Bumbling-Bee pleaded. "I needed your help! This war was, and remains, more important than two women, no matter how much they mean to you!"

Sirius just stared at him in horror. "You- you- a wedding vow is a Wizarding Oath. I swore take care of her in sickness and in health...I swore that I would be with her forever. You forced me to break that oath, Dumbledore! I need to see her again!"

"Then join the Order, and perhaps you can find them."

Remus nearly broke down in tears then and there. Ari would never want him to join this man with all that he had done, but it was his only way to see her again... "I- I-"

Harry interrupted before he had a chance to say more. "Oh yes?" he calmly challenged Dumbledore. "I command that you tell me where they are."

"No."

"So be it. I, the Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles, hereby wish to file a legal complaint with you, Albus Dumbledore, for withholding of information and occupation of a building not in your possession without permission of the owner. I will take this case to the Wizangamot if necessary and petition to have you thrown out as Headmaster of Hogwarts."

"Oh, really? And may I ask who the owner of this mysterious building is?"

"You know very well, Dumbledore. The owner of Number Twelve, Grimmauld Place is Sirius Black. Sirius, have you given this man permission to occupy your home?"

A slow smile was spreading over Sirius' face. "I gave permission to begin with, but stated very clearly upon finding out about the Department of Mysteries incident that I never wanted Dumbledore or his Order in my house again if they could fail to protect a fifteen year old boy and his friends. It seems that you went against my wishes, doesn't it Dumbledore? That's Wizarding Law 875496B- no occupation of a wizarding home without the owner's explicit permission, is it not Dumbledore?"

The older man glared at the Lord of Azkaban. This was not how things were supposed to go at all. "Now, see here-"

"No, *you* see here," Remus interrupted. "She meant, and maybe means, the world to me, and I'm trying my hardest not to curse you right now. If she's dead, I won't be so self-restrained. Now. Tell. Me. Where. She. Is."

Harry wasn't sure whether his threat of going to court had sunk in or the thought of an angry werewolf coming after him was what made Dumbledore sigh and speak the next two words he spoke, but it really didn't matter to him. All that mattered were the words themselves.

"Malfoy Manor."

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourconqueror**

Sirius was furious. No, that wasn't enough to describe the pain he felt inside. He was miserable at the pain he had felt so long, scared out of his wits that she might be dead, jubilous that she could be alive, and angrier than he had ever been at Dumbledore.

How could he have kept something like that from him? It was his wife, the woman he loved more than all else, the one he would give anything for, the one he would die for without a second thought! How could the man that he had trusted and looked up to more than any other do this to him? To Remus? Remus had been slowly dieing inside since the body had appeared on his doorstep, and instead of helping Dumbledore had kept a secret the one thing that could possibly help!

But there was no time now to reflect on the shrewdness and machinations of a bastard of an old man. No- it was time to plan a rescue.

Harry had immediately commandeered Dumbledore's fire and they had Flooed to the Great Hall of Castle Azkaban. From there it was a quick walk to the strategy room.

The strategy room of Castle Azkaban was, to say the least, impressive. When Harry had first seen it, he had been shocked into silence which Nimi filled by explaining that a few generations back the Lord Azkaban had been embroiled with the war against Grindlewald and had, as a result, modified the strategy room to what it was today.

A giant map of the Isle of Azkaban and everything on it was hung on the far wall, animated like the Marauder's Map to show people moving around, although this was slightly better. Dark creatures appeared in red, Light in blue, and Neutral in grey. Witches and wizards appeared as purple, muggles, if any showed up, in yellow, and Death Eaters in a dark navy.

On the right hand wall were two similar, but slightly smaller maps- one portraying Hogwarts, another the Ministry of Magic. On the left hand wall was a blank map that could call up anywhere you set it to, and in the center of the room was a magical projector that showed the status of everyone in the Azkaban Army and anyone else set to have on it.

Along the wall they that had the door in the center were shelves and shelves of weapons, shields, and armor of all types and calibers. On the other side of the door an assortment of potions and spellbooks could be found. In the center of the room was a large, about waist-height round table with a sort of bowl on it that held a load of black particles. Controlled by magic, the particles moved to show the layout of any place in 3-d. All in all, a rather handy place.

Sirius and Remus would have been looking around in awe, if not for the fact that Sirius was currently concentrating on the best way to get Mel back and Remus was still in shock.

“Okay,” Harry said, calling up a map of Malfoy Manor on the blank wall. “It looks like the most likely place for them to be is in this cell here...”

“Doesn’t this one show people?” Sirius asked.

Harry shook his head. “No. To do that, you have to have permission of the owner of the property.” He turned back to the map. “Let’s see... if we Floo in here...”

“Floo won’t work,” Remus piped up with suddenly, startling both of them, “The house will be warded against it.”

Harry nodded. “You’re right, I hadn’t thought of that. So we Portkey to just outside the property border and then walk on- that’ll probably trigger the wards, but that would happen no matter what. So we go onto the property, we make a break for the door, and once inside...”

He paused, examining the map, but Sirius broke in. “We go here- past this back door. If we go down this hallway and then up this one, we’re in the parlor... I think that would work...”

Harry nodded, using magic to trace the route with his wand. “Yes,” he said thoughtfully, “That should work, but I don’t like being in the open here- we can use Disillusionment Charms, but...”

Outside of the Malfoy Grounds, Thirty-Four Minutes and Seventeen Seconds Later

“Ouch! Moony, that’s my foot!”

“Well, I’m sorry Padfoot, but I’m not the only one! You *did* sit on me back there!”

“That was an accident!”

“Quiet!” Not a sound could be heard until the third voice spoke again. “Alright. Do you both see the door?”

“Yes.”

“Yes. Now can we go already?”

The third voice sighed. “Sirius, do you honestly want them to catch us because our efforts weren’t coordinated?”

“Well... when you put it that way...”

“I thought so. Now, you both see the door?”

“Yes.”

“Yes, can we go now?”

Voice three sighed impatiently once more. “Yes, Moony, we can go now.”

The wards of Malfoy Manor were triggered seconds later.

As soon as they were in the house they ran down the hallway that led to the parlor, stopping in the shadows when Lucius Malfoy ran past them. After that, they continued until they reached the room they were looking for.

“What now?” Sirius hissed. “Where is it?”

“Quiet, Sirius!” Harry hissed. “Let’s see... it was on this wall... how cliché, it has to be on the bookshelf somewhere.”

“I don’t give a damn how cliché it is, just tell me where the hell to find it!” Oddly enough, it was Remus, and not Sirius, who had said it.

“All right, Remus, calm down, this looks like a trigger... only responds to a Malfoy, clever. They must have brought someone in to install it. Now, how to... ah! There we go.”

The bookshelf swung back and revealed a set of darkened stairs, sporadic spots light by torches but the rest darker than pitch.

“Well,” came a disembodied voice, “I suppose this is it.”

Sirius and Harry didn’t respond- there was no need to. In a single motion, the three started down the stairs.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Mel managed to raise her head and turn it slightly to look at the woman next to her. "Ari?" she called out weakly. No response. Well, Malfoy had used the Cruciatus a lot, especially on her... She'd probably answer in a minute. "Ari?" Her panic growing at the still lack of response, she shrieked "Arianrhod Diana Lupin!"

She heard a pattering on the stairs of feet running and winced, bracing herself for another round. Malfoy seemed to be incredibly pissed off today. When no one shouted a curse, she opened her eyes, only to stare straight through the bars of the cell into a face she had feared she had never seen again. Looking past him, she could see a certain werewolf as well.

"Aww, shit," she mumbled, "Now I'm hallucinating." Shaking her head to clear it of the illusion, she turned back to Ari. "Arianrhod Lupin, if you don't wake up RIGHT NOW I am going to tell the mirage of my husband to tell the mirage of *your* husband about the time in the robe shop with the FRILLY PINK ONE!" No response. She sighed. "Well, it wasn't really a great threat, I suppose."

"Frilly pink one?" She turned and looked at a third mirage she hadn't noticed before.

"Oh yes, and she would have bought it too if that... what was it called... THAT was it! Girly Hex that James had put on her didn't wear off. Oh, we were all laughing so hard, and she was shrieking..." She sighed again. "Great. Now I'm *talking* to the mirages! I've finally lost it!" Her tone switched to a mumble. "Well, it was bound to happen someday."

"I assure you, you haven't lost your mind," the third mirage said humorously. "*They* might've," he gestured to the other two mirages, "But that would mean that they had them to begin with."

She scowled, and somehow managed to nod in the direction of the Sirius mirage. "Oh, so my dead husband suddenly pops up, looking as alive as ever, and I *still* have my mind, eh?"

"They told you I was dead?" The fake Sirius' voice was strangled and filled with pain.

She shuddered. "Well, you *are* dead," she protested, "Bellatrix killed you! And you're never going to know about any of it... about *her*..." She shook her head. "I don't know why I'm even talking to you. Even if you *are* real, you're just some Death Eater in disguise."

The fake Sirius pressed himself against the bars and reached out. His fingertips barely managed to brush her face, and she shivered. He was real, whoever he was. "S- stay away from me, you- you horrible *thing*! Sirius was eight times the man you'll ever be! You have no right to impersonate him! No right..." A lone tear dripped down her face.

"Ask me something only Sirius would know."

She scowled. "Why should I?"

"So I can prove I'm me."

"Fine." She bit her lip. Something only Sirius would know... something no one else could find out... "The day before they took me, James asked Sirius something. We were at their house, and I was sitting with Lily, and it was a couple of minutes before we left, and the house was already under the Fidelius so no one else could have heard. What was it?"

The fake Sirius chuckled sadly. "He asked me how the hell we got so lucky, and I told him that with Voldemort out there, it was the least Fate could do to give us a reprieve and let us find our one true loves."

Her eyes widened. She stared at him, and managed to say one thing before completely dissolving into tears. "Oh god, Sir."

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourconqueror**

Harry watched the scene with a small smile present. Remus was still in shock at the sight, that much was obvious... He whirled towards the door behind them as it suddenly slammed shut. "F!k," he said calmly, before hurrying to the cell doors. With a highly concentrated

locking charm, the door was opened, and he dragged Sirius and Remus forward before grabbing onto the two women as well. "I am Lord Azkaban," he muttered, praying it would work.

It did. The next thing he knew, he was in the Azkaban Hospital Wing, surrounded by two Marauders, one very confused godmother, and an unconscious surrogate aunt.

Chapter Twenty-One: Order of the Patroni

Harry turned the page of his book, sitting in the chair outside the Hospital Wing. Sirius and Remus had somehow managed to convince his godmother to lie down and let Helene treat her, and her first step was a Dreamless Sleep Potion. After Mel was asleep, Harry had been kicked out. Sirius and Remus had only been allowed to stay because they refused to budge.

So here he was, seven hours, twenty-two minutes, and forty-seven seconds later, on page 403 of “Muggle Means in the Magical World”. It was really quite interesting- it explained ways to enchant Muggle objects so that they worked inside magical wards, and ways that Muggle items had been used in the magical world for years. For example, it is still common for wizards to have a sword, at least for ceremonial purposes.

He was drawn out of his reading, however, when a blurry shape raced down the darkened hallway and collided into him, leaving him with no time to say more than a small “What?” before it launched into a speech.

“You- you could have at least told us what was happening! Imagine how worried we were! You dissapeared into that bastard’s office and then you never came out! You do realize that if I had spoken to the army before finding you, this could have counted as a national emergency and we may very well have gone to war with the Magical United Kingdom on the grounds of kidnapping our leader? What did you think you were doing!”

Harry was obviously holding in laughter, and his voice was rather muffled. “Um, Nimi? Could you maybe get off of me?”

The girl hurriedly pulled back, thanking whatever gods were listening that the hall was so dimly lit and her bright red face wasn’t obvious. She put one hand on her hip and used the other to poke him in the chest with her pointer finger. “Explain. Now.”

He smiled innocently. “I really am sorry about that, you see, a bit of rather amazing news came up, that Dumbledore has been keeping to himself for years...” By the time he had finished, both she, Luna, and

Nikolai, who had shown up a moment after the first girl, were wide eyed.

“So, you have a godmother, and another one who’s as good as, and they’ve been missing for fifteen years, so you went and rescued them?” Nikolai asked.

Harry nodded. “That’s about it, yeah.” He clenched his fists. “And just you wait ‘till I lay my hands on Malfoy...”

“Which one?” Luna asked and laughed, but there was no humor in the sound.

Harry let out a harsh chuckle. “Oh, I have my feuds with Junior too, but this... this goes beyond all that.”

“Oh, I agree,” Luna said, her voice cold. “I wonder if we can get him arrested for kidnapping charges, not that he won’t just break out again or have his Master do it.”

“We probably could charge him, on that and on being a Death Eater. Mel and Ari can give testimony... maybe they can name some other Death Eaters too, it looked as though they might be taking shifts watching them. I’m not sure, but Malfoy probably mentioned people as well.”

“Probably,” Nimi agreed.

“We should swear,” Nikolai said into the sudden silence.

“Swear what?” the Lord Azkaban said, a small frown present on his face.

The other boy blushed. “Sorry, I was spacing out and thinking, after what you said happened to them... I think we should swear to always have each others’ backs in this fight, be it against Dumbledore or Voldemort or anyone else. I mean, to just stick by each other, I guess.” The silence was unnerving.

“That’s a good idea,” Nimi said suddenly.

The other two nodded. "Definitely," Harry said with a grin.

The blonde girl nodded. "And we should have a name, too. Some type of Order, to spite Dumbledore. Like, Harry, Remus, and Sirius wouldn't join his, and formed their own."

Nikolai nodded enthusiastically. "Perfect! How about... The Order of the Gryffin?"

"No, too much like Gryffindor. Bad memories. The Order of the Threstrals?"

"Three words- Department of Mysteries."

"Oh- sorry."

"It's alright. The Order of Azkaban?"

"Too cliché."

"The Order of the Patroni?"

Three heads turned to look at Harry, who immediately went bright red. "It's stupid, I know, I just thought... you know, it takes the form of what you think protects you the most, and, well, it's really the embodiment of happiness..."

"It's perfect," Nimi said, shaking her head.

"I agree."

"Definitely."

He smiled nervously. "Alright then, if you're sure..." When no objections were stated, he placed his hand in the air in front of them. "I, Harry James Potter, Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles, hereby call to session the first meeting of the Order of the Patroni."

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

“... I, Albus Dumbledore, hereby call to session the three-hundreth and eight-second meeting of the Order of the Phoenix. Miss Granger, Mr. Weasley, have you yet managed to speak with the Lord Azkaban?”

Hermione stood, her face turning an interesting shade of red. “I have, Headmaster, but he barely spoke two words to me before leaving. I didn’t get any information, I’m sorry to say.”

Dumbledore sighed. “That’s alright. Mr Weasley?”

“Haven’t had a chance to speak to him yet sir, but I doubt I’ll do much better than Hermione.”

He nodded. “Do try though, Mr. Weasley. Arabella, any luck?”

Professor Figg shook her head. “I found out that his Animagus form is a Grim, for some reason. He wouldn’t say why, or give me his name. Did you know that the youngest girl though, the fourteen-year-old, is his Primary Advisor *and* High War Admiral?”

Dumbledore’s eyes widened. “No, I did not. He never said a word- I assumed she was a girlfriend or sister.” He frowned. “Why would he choose her for those positions?” No one had an answer. “Very well, see if you can find out. On to the next topic- the Heir of the Six. Any news, Severus?”

Snape stood and sneered at the group before speaking. “We have made some progress, Dumbledore. Here’s a basic tree.” He gestured with his wand, and a large sheet unrolled itself. “As you can see here, Merlin had only one child, a daughter born to he and the nymph Nimue. Her line was lost in time, but we do know that she had only one child, a son named Merlin for his grandfather.

“Then there is Morgaine Le’Fay. She had several children, but their lines all died out long ago, at least supposedly. There is reason to believe, however, that her line still exists, living as Muggles. Apparently one of her great-grandchildren was disowned for being a Squib.

“Gryffindor,” he spat the name out like a curse, “Had two children. One was that of he and Ravenclaw, and one was from an affair. He never claimed that line, but they eventually became known as the Fillibusters, as I’m sure we all know from that fuss with my cousin and Black all those years ago.” A momentary flicker of pain crossed his face before it went back to its impassive mask.

“Ravenclaw had a child through a first husband as well, though as near as we can tell the descendants of that line are currently living in America and have never even met any of the other descendants. But the Gryffindor-Ravenclaw line did still exist, up until a few months ago. A line by the name of Potter.” His expression turned sour as the congregation gasped. “Yes, yes, we all know who the Potters are.”

He cleared his throat. “Now, the Slytherin-Hufflepuff line. They were married, though Slytherin did have a wife before Helga who died in a tragic accident. Her son beared the name Riddle, so it is the truth that Tom Riddle or Voldemort is a descendant of Slytherin, though he is in no way the Heir. The Slytherin-Hufflepuff line was notorious for producing Squibs, and eventually the secret of magic was forgotten to them. Until, that is, the great great great etcetera granddaughter of Hufflepuff and Slytherin was sent a letter to Hogwats.”

Now his expression looked as though he had swallowed a lemon. “While there are other candidates through other lines that I have yet to research, that girl’s name was Lily Evans.”

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Meanwhile, their best candidate for Heir of the Six was laughing as he and his friends played Exploding Snap. “Ace! I win again!”

Luna scowled. “You’re cheating! I know it!” The effect was ruined when she dissolved into laughter, quickly followed by the others. The game was interrupted, however, when Helene opened the door to the Hospital Wing. Harry quickly stood.

“My Lord,” she whispered, sweeping a curtsy, “they’ve been awake for a few hours now, and after talking with their husbands they wish to see you.”

“Do they know my name as of yet?”

Helene shook her head. “Not that I know of, Lord.”

He nodded thoughtfully. “Thank you. I’ll be there in a moment.” He turned back to the others. “Do you mind if I...”

They all shook their heads, and it was Nikolai who spoke. “Not at all. You deserve it, H- Lord Azkaban.”

Harry smiled and walked through the doorway into the Hospital Wing, quietly shutting the doors behind him before making his way to the two beds in the farthest corner, where Ari and Mel were conversing softly with their husbands.

He slowed and smiled at the scene. The first thought to flash across his mind was ‘Kodak moment!’. Remus had somehow finagled himself so that he could wrap his arms protectively around his wife’s waist as though he were afraid that if he let go, he’d lose her. Sirius was holding tightly onto Mel’s hand with one of his own and had his other arm behind her back with her leaning against him. Mentally sighing heavily at having to break in on the peaceful scene, he cleared his throat. All four adults immediately looked up.

“Sorry to interrupt,” he said with a regretful grin, “But you wanted to see me?”

Ari immediately shakily raised a hand for him to shake, which Remus pushed down gently with a small scowl. “You need to just rest.”

She pouted. “Honestly Remy, I was just going to shake his hand!”

Harry chuckled softly. “He is right, you do need to rest.” His expression turned dark. “I am going to *kill* Malfoy...” he muttered.

“Not if I get to him first,” Sirius said, his eyes flashing.

Harry laughed softly. “Fine. You get Senior, but I get to make sure Junior never procreates.”

Sirius winced. “Deal.”

Mel cleared her throat. "While I very much welcome death and otherwise threats against the Malfoys, there was a reason we asked you to come in here. Sirius and Remus won't tell us about my godson, Harry Potter. They said that you could, though."

Harry glared at Sirius and Remus. "They did, did they?" He then sighed heavily. "Well, I knew it would come up eventually. Better sooner than later, I suppose." With another sigh and a passing glance at the two older men, who looked at him nervously, he began his tale. "I guess the story really starts when he was young- I imagine you know about Sirius being framed, and as Remus was a werewolf he couldn't be awarded custody- so Harry was sent to the Dursleys, his closest, and only, living relatives.

"Life there, while not the best, was manageable for Harry. Sure, his uncle hit him every once in a while, and he was bullied by Dudley and lived in the cupboard under the stairs, but he was for the most part left on his own to do as he pleased.

"One thing bothered him though- the strange things that always seemed to happen to him. And then, one day, he got a letter..."

The next hour was spent explaining his first five years at Hogwarts. When he reached the summer after his Fifth Year, however, he paused.

"Yes?" Ari asked quietly, seeming to sense his inner turmoil. "What's wrong?"

He shook his head. "Just- memories. Anyways... Ahem. Well, after his Fifth Year, Harry went back to the Dursleys, completely depressed over Sirius' supposed 'death'. And then, one a warm July day, he was sent to the grocery store. He returned to find Death Eaters cornering his Aunt and Uncle. He tried to fight, but was hit with a Stunner. When he awoke, it was in a holding cell at the Ministry of Magic.

"He went on trial for murder. A spell had been placed on him that forced him to lie under the Veritaserum. He was sent to Azkaban."

Mel covered her hand with her mouth and Ari gasped. Harry smiled wryly. "Yes. He couldn't escape like Sirius, with the new wards. But then-" he gulped. "But something strange had happened when he appeared on the Isle. A glowing rune had appeared on his hand. A young Lieutenant recognized it, and took him to the Hospital to recover. Because, you see, Harry Potter..." He bit his lip and tugged off his hood with a single fluid motion. "Harry Potter is me."

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VilalinSaviourConqueror**

Ginny Weasley scowled at her wall. They wouldn't tell her *anything*. No, scratch that, they had told her that the traitor had died. Well, good riddance. She couldn't believe that she had had a crush on him once.

Now the Lord of Azkaban... he was hot. He had a sort of dark, mysterious air about him. She knew that she hadn't been the only girl swooning in the hallways as he walked past.

But she had a sneaking suspicion that there was something going on with him and the shorter girl. The rumours around the school were unbeliavable- she was his girlfriend, he was married and they were having an affair, they had eloped years ago... The theories ran rampant.

And then there was the Battle of Diagon Alley. Everyone knew that it had been them to go. All the guys had started to sigh over the short girl, the one they called the Slayer of Deserving, though none dared to do so over Luna- everyone agreed she was crazy, after siding with the traitor. Stupid bitch. And to think she had considered her a friend.

She sighed and picked up her quill. It was time to do her Potions essay.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

.:A Few Hours Earlier, the Azkaban Hospital Wing:.

Mel slowly awakened, determinedly keeping her eyes closed. It had been a dream. It had to have been a dream. She had dreamed that

Sirius had come to save her, that her Padfoot had been there. It was all a dream.

A heavy weight on her heart, she opened her eyes to find herself staring at a navy blue ceiling. Her breath caught in her throat as she felt a pressure on her hand, which increased at the sudden noise. And Sirius' face swam into her view.

His face was lined with care and worry, and he was frowning, but she had never thought he had looked more handsome. "Mel?" he asked hoarsely. "Mel, are you alright?"

"Sirius," she breathed. "I thought- I thought I had dreamed it..."

He chuckled softly and stroked her face. "I'm never leaving you again if I can help it."

Without another word she sat up and threw her arms around him in a fluid motion. He immediately hugged her back, clutching her tightly to his chest. "Shh," he whispered into her ear. "It'll be alright. I'm here now. And I'm so, so sorry. I didn't know, I didn't know..." They were now clutching each other, sobbing.

After a few minutes, they had calmed down, and something suddenly struck her. She could tell him. He would know... "Sirius," she breathed. "Do you remember- do you remember what I said, back-back there? I said that you would never know..."

He frowned. "I- yes, never know what?"

"About... well. They- they check you, for protection spells and the like, when they capture you, and well..." Her voice turned very quiet. "It turned out I was pregnant." Trying not to look at his face, she took a deep breath. "And- and they said that they would raise the baby to be Voldemort's heir- and then I went into labor, but Sev was on guard, and he agreed to take the baby to an orphanage, and I told him that Lucius had told me you were innocent, and he said he'd tell Dumbledore everything, and then he left with our baby girl..."

Sirius was staring at her wide-eyed. "I'm a daddy?"

Chapter Twenty-Two: Avada Kedavra

"Because, you see, Harry Potter..." He bit his lip and tugged off his hood with a single fluid motion. "Harry Potter is me."

Both women gasped. Ari was the first to speak. "Harry?" she whispered, her voice hoarse. "How..."

Harry sent her a half-smile. "Well, I told you about how Nimi found me..." He didn't notice Mel's intake of breath at the name. "She brought me to the Hospital Wing, the previous Council proved that I was me, I named her my Primary Advisor and High War Admiral on my own instinct and the advice of the previous High War Admiral, Artur... And then I came to get Luna from Hogwarts, because I had heard she believed in my innocence... She told me that Remus was sympathetic as well, and it was all too convenient when he tried to break into Azkaban to break me out and ended up being caught by my guards..." All heads turned to look at the blushing former werewolf.

"Well, I knew what you lot would do to me if I just left him in there! Besides, I wasn't about to just abandon him after I realized about the Veritaserum..."

Sirius grinned widely. "Why didn't you tell me about this, mate?"

Remus snorted. "Because I knew you would never let me live it down."

Ari kissed his cheek, which made him go even redder. "Well, I think it was terribly heroic," she informed him.

Harry cleared his throat. "Right, well... I made Remus and Luna Secondary Advisors... and then I met Nikolai and made him my Liason to the Azkabanian, and Nimi made me host a ball..." He made a face. "If it weren't for the fact that that was the reason we were able to get to Sirius, I would never agree to go within a hundred foot radius of one of those again."

His godfather had a curious expression. "Do tell. You never did really mention how you found out about it, other than Nimi had told you."

The Lord Azkaban chuckled. "Actually, she had wrangle me into slow dancing with her, and..." He bit his lip. "How..." He blushed. "That's right. They were playing some song that I had heard you hum or something, Sirius, and I got all upset... Well, she noticed me crying, and asked what was wrong, and I mentioned something about 'that goddamned Veil', and she remembered the way to get people out."

"How did she know?" Remus asked. "You never did say."

"Well, it's actually a rather long story, but the Ministry building used to be Azkabanian turf, and the fourth Lord of Azkaban created the Veil as a way of punishing prisoners, as he didn't like the idea of the Dementor's Kiss... but after the building was seized, his son, the fifth Lord of Azkaban, emptied the Veil and executed everyone... so she knew the spell and everything, she said she learned it in her History class." His next words were muttered. "At least she got to learn something other than Goblin rebellions..."

Ari snorted. "Binns still alive then?"

"Oh no, but he is still teaching. Apparently, he just got up one day and left his body behind. Why the Bumbling-Bee keeps him on I'll never know..."

"Bumbling-Bee?" Mel asked, obviously amused.

"Hm? Oh! That's what I call that bastard Dumbledore- it is what his name means in old English after all. Well, sort of, Bumblebee i-" He didn't have time to finish his sentence as he was interrupted by a shriek and a shout of "AVADA KEDAVRA!"

His face immediately went pale and he pulled up his hood as he muttered "Oh shit" and ran out the door.

**f n v k l l d f n s k l v n f k d l v s k l v n k l d n f v k l d f n v k l d f n v j k d n f v j k d f j k l v n d f s k j l v
n k l d s f v n k l d f s n v**

Dumbledore looked up as Snape stormed into his office. "Dumbledore," he hissed. "I just received word from Malfoy. Apparently his prisoners, who were conveniently enough my cousin

and her best friend, have been rescued somehow, though you claimed they were dead. Care to explain?"

The old man sighed and shook his head. "Severus... I said I knew of no way to retrieve them. I can only assume that someone did."

The Potions Master nodded stiffly. "Bear in mind, Dumbledore, that if they are harmed in any way, you will not only be facing the wrath of a Black, but a Snape. For your sake, she'd better be alright."

Snape swept out of the room without another word, the door banging shut behind him. Dumbledore banged his head on his desk. Nothing was working out according to plan. Nothing.

**dfbvlfkdv njkdsfv njlfnjkdsv njkdsfv njkdsfv jkdsfbvj kfdbvjkdvjkb
dfvkj bdfjvsdfj kv**

Severus Snape sank into a chair in his office and sighed heavily. He just didn't know what to do anymore, not at all.

He and his cousin had not been on the best of terms since they were small. They had been best friends then, he and Mel and her brother the only ones in their family against the Dark Arts. But then his parents had decided to move from Ireland to England, to keep him away from his cousins in a hope to reform him to their ideals.

It had worked.

He had been Sorted into Slytherin, and become interested in the Dark Arts. He had quickly fallen in with the wrong people, people like Lucius Malfoy and Bellatrix Lestrange. And then, in their Fifth Year, Mel had transferred. He later found out that she had been shunned at Durmstrang, for she had held onto her ideals while he had been unable to. He resented her for that.

He pushed her away, told her he hated her. He had, at the time. To his delight, the Marauders had taken to pranking her- until, that is, that idiot Black had found out about her history and become her friend. She had quickly become one of the most popular girls in Gryffindor... but she still remained that cheerful, sarcastic girl he remembered from his youth.

He had joined Voldemort to spite her. Sort of a slap in the face, to show that he could join the winning side. She had found out- she had seen his arm. She had been furious. She had told him that no person was below any other, that no one was worthless, regardless of their history, their bloodline. She had begged him to go to Dumbledore, to turn traitor, to see reason. He had obliterated her.

But he had thought on what she had said all the same, and in the end he had turned to Dumbledore and taken the curse off of her. She had been even more angry at first, but their relationship slowly mended itself until they were shaky friends.

And then she had been captured.

He had ignored everyone, prayed to be put on duty at wherever she was being held so that he could see her. And when he finally had, she had gone into labor. *That* was a memory he would have much rather blocked out.

But as per her instructions, he had disregarded her own safety, and taken his baby niece to an orphanage. He had also told Dumbledore that Black was innocent, though the man had managed to talk him out of it.

He no longer wanted to side with the old man, now that he knew Mel was alive. All he wanted was to escape, to tell Mel he was sorry that he hadn't been able to help her out of a husband and to never see Dumbledore, or any of the Order of the Phoenix, again. But he knew that wouldn't happen. Fate was a bitch, and she hated him. Completely.

He stood to finish the Veritaserum he was brewing. No point in dwelling on the past. Besides, he could always get out some Firewhisky later.

**vnklvsnklfvndknjklvlvnjksdnvjknfdkfvnfjkvjknvjknfdjknvjknfdnfvjk
dfnfvjknvjknfdvn**

"Oh for the love of Clan McGonagall!" the Head of Gryffindor shouted, throwing her hands in the air. Her accent was more pronounced than

he had ever heard it. "What did you think you were doing, Mr. Weasley?"

Ron winced and mumbled something under his breath.

"Oh, so you think that the fact that he called your ex-best friend, a boy who, may I remind you, betrayed us, a You-Know-Who supporter, made you curse him?"

Ron deflated. "You're right, Professor, I'm sorry. For a moment... I guess I just got caught up in the past, is all."

McGonnagal sighed. "Yes, Mr. Weasley. Twenty points from Gryffindor, and detention tomorrow night with Professor Hagrid." She then turned on Malfoy. "And you, Mr. Malfoy, twenty points from Slytherin and detention tomorrow, same as Mr. Weasley. Now, both of you, back to your Common Rooms. "

"Yes, Professor McGonnagal," they said deadenly before leaving in opposite directions. The woman sighed and sank into the chair behind her.

"Stupid boy," she muttered. Everything had changed after Potter's betrayal. Voldemort had gotten more confident- the attacks had only increased, unlike decreasing like they had thought they would with the loss of the bastard's right-hand man. The Lord of Azkaban had turned up, but refused to side with Dumbledore, and incidents like the one between Messrs. Malfoy and Weasley were only too common.

Why did he have to betray them? He had seemed so innocent, so kind with those Killing Curse eyes... She had always thought of him as the nephew she had never had, as family... He had been the perfect Gryffindor, an amazing flier, a wonderful person, or so they had thought. He had fooled them all.

He had tricked them, with those bright green Avada Kedavra eyes...

**dfbnklvnklfdnfvklfdnfvjndfjlnjdnvlnsfjklvnjdfsenvjklfdnfvklfd
nvljkdvnljkdfnv**

Something big was going on. Hermione could tell. That night at dinner, Dumbledore was tense, and she was sure she would be called to an Order meeting tonight. Something was up.

Sure enough, that night found her, Ron, and the rest of the Order in the meeting room, waiting for what Dumbledore had to say. Looking around, Hermione suddenly realized there was one notable absence- Snape's.

"Headmaster," she called out, causing everyone to look at her. "Where is Professor Snape? Has he been called?"

Dumbledore pinched the bridge of his nose. "I am afraid that Severus is part of the reason we are here." He sighed heavily. "I am sure that those who were on the staff about twenty years ago will remember Meliara Filibuster and Arianrhod McKinnon?"

McGonagall blew her nose into a handkerchief. "Those poor women," she said softly. "They were such good girls, too."

"Indeed!" squeaked Filius Flitwick. "I remember, they would always get the spell on the first try! Well, most of the time, anyways... not as good as Miss Evans, but they came close!"

The elderly man nodded, his eyes closed. "Yes, quite. You see... about seven or eight months after their capture, Severus was assigned to guard duty over them, and told they were in the Malfoy Manor. He was never assigned duty there again, and as it was by Portkey he didn't know how to reach the dungeons from the house. I of course assigned people to search, but we never found them. You see, Severus is rather angry with me because I told him there was no way to find them, but we recently received word that they have been rescued, I am presuming by a certain Messrs. Black and Lupin."

Hermione's mouth was in a small 'oh', and Ron was a bright red. "Well, it's not like it was your fault, sir!" he exclaimed. "You tried!"

The Headmaster managed a weak smile. "Thank you, Mr. Weasley."

"I don't blame you either Headmaster," Minerva proclaimed calmly. "You tried to find those poor women, and someone did, and that's all

that matters. I am curious, however, as to why Severus was never assigned guard duty again.”

He sighed and put a hand over his eyes. “It seems that Miss Fillibuster was pregnant when she was kidnapped. The Death Eaters, of course, found this out and decided to raise the baby to be that Dark Lord’s successor as it was to be a pureblood. Mel naturally protested, and she was lucky enough that Severus was on duty when she went into labor. She begged him to take the child and bring it to an orphanage, and Severus, being her cousin, agreed. Lucius suspected, and while he could prove nothing, he never let Severus guard again.”

A cacophany of voices rose.

“She was *pregnant*?”

“Oh, the poor girl!”

“Her cousin?”

“I didn’t know Professor Snape had any family!”

But when a cold voice entered the fray, everyone turned to see Snape leaning against the doorway, having gotten there a few seconds before. “I assure you Miss Granger I do have a family, even if they are all pureblooded bigots. Except Mel.” his gaze turned thoughtful, and then he glared at Dumbledore. “And yes, she was pregnant,. yes she gave birth to a girl, and she was not ‘Miss Fillibuster’ when she was pregnant, Albus- as you well know, her married name is Black.” Ignoring the gasps coming from Ron, Hermione, and several other Order members, he sneered. “I was coming down to see if anything important had happened, but apparently you just felt the need to tell her life story, entwining mine in as well and completely neglecting to mention Black or Lupin or Potter or any of the others, including the other Lupin. I’ll just be leaving now.” He sent out a last glare before exiting the room, slamming the door behind him once more.

The Order turned to look at Dumbledore, who sighed once more and rested his head in his hands. "Yes, she was married to Sirius- it's been years, and it completely slipped my mind."

"What did he mean, the other Lupin?"

It was McGonagall who answered this one. "Arianrhod McKinnon wed Remus Lupin. They weren't allowed to have children of course, with the werewolf edicts. I distinctly remember Mr. Luin barging into Phoenix Headquarters, looking all dissarayd, and when we asked him what was wrong, just grinning widely and saying 'she said yes!' over and over. Sirius and James were the only ones who managed to calm him down and get the whole story out of him."

Hermione frowned. "Why didn't they ever say they were married?"

Emmaline Vance spoke. "I imagine the subject was too painful for the both of them, especially Sirius. I would guess he had few bad memories of her, which means that when he broke out of Azkaban he would just be beginning his time to grieve, as he wouldn't remember her in that place."

The girl nodded thoughtfully. "That makes sense. So who's their daughter?"

Dumbledore shook his head. "We don't know- at least I don't. I don't think Severus does either. He knows her name, which is more than I can say, but he won't tell me. I imagine that he took the vow to keep her safe a little too seriously."

"A girl, then?"

"Yes. All I know is that her given last name is Black, not Fillibuster-Black. And that's it."

"Could she be the Heir?" Ron asked hopefully.

Dumbledore shook his head with a sigh. "No. While Meliara does carry the blood of Gryffindor, as Severus explained, Sirius was checked out extremely well. No, their child is not the Heir."

“Well, are we sure the child is Sirius’?” This was Mundungus Fletcher.
“After all, nevber thought the punk’d settle down...”

Minerva glared at him. “How dare you! Sirius may have dated girls before Mel, but I assure you here and now that the two of them loved each other more than you’ll ever know. Either of them would have gladly jumped in front of an Avada Kedavra to save the other.”

Fletch looked down, abashed. “Sorry Minnie,” he said gruffly, “Just don’t want to think of the Heir being that Potter boy.”

Dumbledore shook his head. “None of us do, Mr. Fletcher, none of us do.”

And many miles away, the Heir of the Six ran.

To try and prevent confusion, here's a quick timeline-

1960: The Marauders are born.

1971-77: Marauders go to Hogwarts,

1978: Lily and James are married.

July 31st, 1980: Harry is born.

September 30th, 1981: Arianrhod is captured.

September 31st, 1981: Remus discovers Ari's 'body' on his doorstep.

October 10th, 1981: Mel is captured.

October 24th, 1981: The Potters switch Secret Keepers.

October 31st, 1981: The Potters are attacked.

November 1st, 1981: Sirius attacks Peter and is sent to Azkaban without a trial.

November 3rd, 1981: Harry is sent to the Dursleys'.

June 28th, 1982: Mel's daughter is born.

1991: Harry begins his first year at Hogwarts.

Chapter Twenty-Three: Guilty Until Proven Innocent

Nimi didn't have time to think- she just reacted. As the flash of green light sped towards Luna she jumped forward and knocked the girl down before coming out of her fall with a semi-graceful roll and her wand at the ready. "Expelliarmus!" she cried, but the cloaked figure was ready for it. He dived to the side and positioned his wand again, this time at her.

"Crucio!"

She dived down, feeling the spell's force ruffle her cloak as it passed her, before unclasping said item and throwing it down, getting to her feet with a catlike grace. "Petrificus Totalis!"

Her opponent danced to the side and chuckled. "Don't you know any spells past third year, girly?" he asked in a raspy voice.

She smirked at him, and dodged to the side as he shot another Cruciatus at her. "Expelliarmus!" cried a voice from behind her, and she ducked as Nikolai's spell flew over her head, shortly followed by one of Luna's. Her unknown opponent evaded both of them, though, and she felt an icy fear clench her heart as he began to utter the words once more. "Avada-"

"NO!" roared a familiar voice, and then "Stupefy!" Nimi took advantage of the man's momentary distraction to shoot an onslaught of curses at him. A Stinging Hex caught him in the leg and he cried out in pain as he grabbed the offending limb.

"Silencio!" Harry shouted, followed quickly by "Petrificus Totalis!" His second spell didn't hit, although the first did, and Nimi hurriedly cast another.

"Petrificus Totalis!" This time the spell managed to graze the man, who couldn't move fast enough, and he fell to the ground, stiff as a board. Nimi breathed a sigh of relief, which was cut short when Harry pulled her into a tight hug.

"If you *ever* scare me like that again, I'll, I'll... I don't know what I'll do, but I assure you you won't like it!"

She chuckled- well, as well as one can with the life being squeezed out of them. "Harry-need-breath-"

He immediately backed away, a slight blush coloring his otherwise pale cheeks. "Sorry," he mumbled. He then glanced over at the frozen body of their attacker and his gaze darkened. "Do you know who it is?" he asked, his voice sounding cold.

Nimi shrugged. "I don't know. Some Death Eater." Her eyes suddenly brightened and she smacked herself in the forehead. "How could I forget?"

"What?" Harry asked her, a frown creasing his face.

"Fudge fire-called Dumbledore shortly after you'd left- they're finally ready to have the trial whenever you show up."

Harry smiled suddenly. "So they did realize I meant it about blowing the Ministry to smithereens if I wasn't allowed to attend."

Nimi snorted. "Apparently so. You'll be wanting too wait until they've recovered enough to testify, won't you?"

He nodded. "Definitely." He looked around the room, noticing Nikolai holding Luna while she rubbed at the bump on her head, an expression of pain and irritation on her face.

"Luna!" he called out suddenly, causing both her and Nikolai to look up at him, startled, "Let's get you to Helene!"

She pouted but nodded, and allowed Nikolai to help her to her feet and into the wing, leaving Harry and Luna alone with the other man. Well, until Sirius and Remus rushed out.

Harry looked at them hopefully. "Well, will you look at that! It looks like I accidentally charmed the wing doors not to let you out..."

Sirius growled. "Do you know how scared we were?"

The ex-werewolf next to him nodded, looking menacing with his arms crossed. Harry swallowed. "Well, I'm sorry! But there would have been more spells if there were more of them, and I wasn't going to let you jump out here into the fray when you just got them back!" He tilted his head towards the wing. "I mean, I knew I could handle it, and-"

It was Sirius' turn to grab Harry into a large hug. "Don't you dare think for one moment that we would be happy enough if you died just

because they're here," he breathed in Harry's ear. "Because we wouldn't be. Not for a moment."

Harry pulled back after a moment, his face flushed bright red. "Well... um... oh!" His eyes lit up. "According to Nimi, Fudge called after we left- as soon as we're ready, they'll have the trial!"

A sudden grin lit his godfather's face. "Really?"

Harry nodded excitedly. "Yes!" He then paused. "Do you think they'll want to testify once they're up to it?"

Remus nodded immediately. "No doubt of it. They wouldn't miss it for the world."

The boy shrugged in return. "In that case, we'll want to wait at least a few days. It's already been a week- what's a little longer?"

Sirius smiled and ruffled Harry's hair. "Agreed, Prongslet."

knklvnsdfklvnfdklvndvfklnkldfnvklfdndnsvklfnklfdnsvlkfdnvklsvklfdnklnsffnkfn

"Ah! Lord Azkaban!" The Minister of Magic walked over to Harry as fast as his chubby legs would carry him. "I received your owl-"

Harry raised an eyebrow. "Why would you be here if you hadn't?"

The man looked uncomfortable for a moment before laughing uproariously. "Of course, of course! Well, you said you had several witnesses?"

Harry nodded coldly. It would seem that the Minister had decided to appear friendly with him now, at least in public. "Yes," he said calmly. "Allow me to introduce Meliara Black, Arianrhod Lupin, and Remus Lupin. They will all be testifying against Mr. Pettigrew, and Remus against Mrs. Lestrange as well."

Fudge nodded, staring at the two women. "I... see. I was under-under the impression- that they- they were dead?"

“Merely prisoners of Voldemort,” Mel supplied. “Dreadfully boring, really.”

“Oh yes, you know the drill,” said Ari.

“Lack of water-“

“Horrible food-“

“Chained to a wall-“

“No sleep-“

“Lots of Cruciatus Curses to keep you company-“

“All sorts of torture actually-“

“Oh yes, plenty of torture.”

“Yes, quite. But we digress.”

“Indeed we do, Ari. I suppose we’ll be seeing you around, Mr. Minister Man.”

The Minister of Magic, looking somewhat stricken, merely nodded and walked away. Harry smiled at the two women. “I didn’t know there was so effective a way of shutting him up.”

Mel laughed. “Oh yes. Anything to do with dear old Tom and he’ll run straight out. Or at least, that was how he was when he was Head of Magical Law Enforcement- I could only assume he was the same way now.” Ari nodded in agreement.

Harry chuckled, and then turned to grin at the black dog at his side. “I really don’t understand why you insist on remaining like that, but to each their own.” Sirius woofed, and Remus laughed.

“I can only assume he wants to make a grand entrance once the verdict is read.”

“Lord Azkaban.”

Harry turned to see Dumbledore, followed by Snape, McGonagall, Hermione, Ron, Arabella, and several other Order figures. "Professor," he said neutrally, his face frozen.

"Mel," Snape breathed, practically running forward and hugging her, cradling her against him. To Harry's surprise, Sirius merely panted.

She pulled back and looked at him, face somewhat strained. "Severus."

Harry, realizing that something needed to be discussed, turned to the rest of the group, most of whom were looking in awe at Snape's display of emotion. "They need to talk," he said, voice cold. "You might as well get seats. Do not bother to save one for Professor Snape- he will be sitting with us."

If Dumbledore was surprised, he didn't show it. "Of course. Follow me." The rest of his underlings did so like obedient little children, glancing back several times at the scene behind them until Harry glared.

"Mel," Snape said, sounding strained. "You have to understand- I told him he was innocent, I told him just like you asked, but he wouldn't listen, he talked me out of it, and I'm so sorry-"

"Wait," Harry interrupted, his voice harsh. "He knew that there was a good chance that S- Padfoot was innocent?"

Snape nodded, too blinded by emotion to truly realize what was going on. He turned back to Mel. "And he said... he said that he'd looked, but that you must be dead, and I believed him... God, I believed him... but when I found out that they'd gone after you I swear I told him that it was all his fault, and I hate him, I really do, and-"

Mel smiled at him. "I forgive you," she said softly before her grin widened into a mischievous one. "You realize that there are former students of yours here?"

Snape immediately snapped to himself, and a faint tinge of pink dotted his angled face. "Right," he said with a small cough, before

pulling her into another brief hug. "I'm so glad you're safe," he mumbled. "You always were my favorite cousin."

"And you mine."

Harry, though a little startled at the revelation, cleared his throat softly. "The trial will start soon, and I assume that you're testifying as well, Professor?"

Snape nodded. "Indeed, Lord Azkaban. Are you?"

Harry shrugged. "I couldn't really say anything except for the way they were caught, and everyone knows that anyway, so there's really no point. Snuffles and I will just be in the regular section." He smirked as Snape's eyes widened at the name. "I'll see you lot once we've won."

Mel laughed and hugged him. "Of course." Ari hugged him as well, and then the two dragged Snape off, who was still staring at Harry.

The boy snorted and looked down at Sirius again. "Ready to find seats?" His godfather woofed, and they set off through the main doors and a spot on the benches, close to both the Minister and the floor. After a moment, Fudge stood up and pompously declared that the trial was ready to begin.

Lestranger's went first- it was all a blur to Harry, because she helped with nothing- he certainly got vengeance on her for what she had done to Sirius, to him, but it didn't prove him or Sirius innocent. And then it was Pettigrew's turn.

Harry felt his fists clench as the man was dragged in by the Dementors, so angry that he didn't even feel the wave of cold that swept over the room. He glared at the man who had ruined his life, and the traitorous rat shuddered at the force of it, though he did not know from whence it came. Harry heard a dog growl beside him, and forced himself to calm down and put a hand on his godfather's head.

"It's like I said three years ago Sirius," Harry murmured. "He deserves Azkaban Prison. And he'll get it."

Fudge stood and cleared his throat. "I hereby call to order the trial of Peter Phillip Pettigrew. Our first witness will be Mrs. Meliara-" he swallowed "-Black." Mutters burst out here, but were cut off as Mel walked into the room, her robes swirling behind her in a decidedly Snape-like fashion. 'Perhaps,' Harry thought amusedly, 'they are cousins after all.'

She sat gracefully in the seat and crossed her hands in her lap. Fudge coughed slightly. "Right. Will you be willing to submit to Veritaserum Mrs. Black?"

She smiled mildly. "I really don't see whyever not, Mr. Minister Man."

He flushed red and coughed again. "Um. Alright then. Ahh... just administer that then, Mr. Weasley..."

Percy Weasley stepped forward rather nervously. She smiled sweetly at him. "You don't have anything to be afraid of. I don't bite. Much."

It was all Harry could do not to burst out laughing at the look on Percy's face. Sirius snorted; as well as a dog could, that is. Percy's hands shook as he let several drops of Veritaserum fall on her tongue and Mel's eyes glazed over.

Fudge walked down to the floor and began the questioning.

"What is your name?"

Mel's voice was bland and monotone, devoid of the spark of life it had held a mere minute prior. "Meliara Elysybyth Fillibuster."

"How old are you?"

"Thirty-six."

"Are you married to Mr. Sirius Black?"

"Yes."

"Do you believe him guilty?"

“No.” Whispers began once more at this statement, and Sirius let out a small whimper of happiness.

“Why?”

“Because he wasn’t the Potter’s Secret Keeper at the time of their deaths.”

“No? Who was?”

“Peter Pettigrew.” Several gasps could be heard, but the questioning continued.

“How do you know this?”

“Sirius told me. We were to be going into hiding soon ourselves.”

“Did Mr. Black kill Peter Pettigrew?”

“No. Peter transformed into a rat and cut off his own finger before running away.”

Fudge turned purple. “Peter Pettigrew is not an animagus.”

“Yes he is. Just not registered.”

Fudge sighed heavily. “Of course, dear. Now, how would you know this?”

“Peter told me.”

This time, everyone went wild. Harry’s eyes were wide open with shock, as was Sirius’ mouth. She hadn’t told them this part.

“QUIET!” the Minister bellowed. Silence fell. “Thank you. Now, when did Mr. Pettigrew tell you this?”

“Oh, about a month after my capture. he was put on guard duty over Ari and I. I asked him to get us out, what was going on, and he told us that he was a Death Eater, that he had betrayed us all and framed Sirius... he loved to see my pain at that.”

Mel was beginning to break free of the potion, it was easy to see. Fudge asked one last question. "How did you escape?"

"Sirius came for me," she said, her voice vague with the last effects of the potion. "He always does, Mr. Minister Man. He always does. And he always will."

The last of the potion wore off, and she shook her head before smiling brightly, apparently oblivious to the shocked silence of the courtroom. "Need anything else, Mr. Minister Man?" He shook his head mutely, and she stood, winking at Harry and Sirius before whisking herself out of the room.

Ari was next. Her testimony was much the same as Mel's, as she had been there when Pettigrew appeared too. Snape was called next. He walked into the room as though he owned it, and glared at the Minister before sitting down.

Fudge, who was weary with this by now, said with a heavy sigh "All right Percy, put him under." Percy gulped at the glare sent to him by his ex-teacher, but nonetheless complied.

"Your name is?"

"Severus Gawain Snape."

"Do you think Black is innocent?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"My cousin Meliara told me, whom I trust with my life, and I overheard Remus Lupin tell the story. It makes sense."

Fudge sighed. "Very well. Somebody get him out of here." Sirius growled deep in his throat, but the Ministry workers complied. Harry winced as he heard Mel's shriek when Severus was dragged into the waiting room still half-sedated.

“WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON HERE, YOU BLOODY STUPID SONS OF FU-“

Whatever else she said was cut off as the doors closed behind a very red Remus Lupin. “Sorry about that,” he said apologetically. “She gets pissed off easily.” He made his way to the chair and sat down, tapping his foot nervously and cursing that he didn’t have the even temperment of the Filibuster-Snapes.

Remus’ questioning went well- he told of the night in the Shrieking Shack, and everyone winced at the name of Harry Potter- but other than that, things went well. He told of how Lily and James hadn’t been able to tell him of their Secret Keeper switch for fear he may have sided with Voldemort, and of how Sirius had had his back in the past few years. When he was sent out of the courtroom, he was grinning.

Fudge looked around. “Anyone else wish to decide to testify now?” When no one spoke up, he let out a relieved sigh. “On to Mr. Pettigrew.”

Peter struggled and whimpered as they applied the potion, but in a moment his eyes had glossed over like the others before him.

“What is your name?”

“Peter Phillip Pettigrew.”

“Are you guilty of the crimes Sirius Black was accused of?” Harry was startled. Apparently Fudge had decided to make this short. All the better really- if it were any other trial but this, he would be asleep by now.

“Yes.” Shrieks and cries rang thorough the room, and it took nearly ten minutes to silence them.

“You serve You-Know-Who?”

“Yes.”

“Have you committed any other crimes?”

“Yes.”

“What are they?”

“I helped to bring the Dark Lord back to life. I tortured many people. When Remus Lupin found out I was the spy, I put an illegal Memory Charm on him.” Harry gasped, and then growled. Oh, that rat would pay. “And I helped to frame Harry Potter.”

Harry turned pale. This time, there were no shouts- just silence and stares. “What,” Fudge croaked out finally.

“I and some of my fellow had gone to his house to look for him. We were torturing his relatives when he came back. He tried to fight, but we stunned him. Bellatrix did, actually, after he called her ‘Bell-a-bitch’.” Sirius woofed. “Rodolphus cast a curse on him so that he would tell a falsehood unintentionally under Veritaserum, and we left him there and went back to our Master. He was very pleased.”

Fudge looked sick, and sneered. “You mean the Potter boy was innocent?”

“Yes.”

And that was all it took. Suddenly there were people crying, screaming, saying how they knew it all along... and Harry risked a satisfied glance at Albus Dumbledore’s stricken face as both he and Sirius were proclaimed innocent.

To try and prevent confusion, here's a quick timeline-

1960: The Marauders are born.

1971-77: Marauders go to Hogwarts,

1978: Lily and James are married.

July 31st, 1980: Harry is born.

September 30th, 1981: Arianrhod is captured.

October 1st, 1981: Remus discovers Ari's 'body' on his doorstep.

October 10th, 1981: Mel is captured.

October 17th, 1981: The Potter's appoint a Secret Keeper; Sirius.

October 24th, 1981: The Potters switch Secret Keepers.

October 31st, 1981: The Potters are attacked.

November 1st, 1981: Sirius attacks Peter and is sent to Azkaban without a trial.

November 3rd, 1981: Harry is sent to the Dursleys'.

June 28th, 1982: Mel's daughter is born.

1991: Harry begins his first year at Hogwarts.

Chapter Twenty-Four: Wish Upon A Star

"I hereby officially pardon Harry James Potter and Sirius Orion Black of all crimes they were convicted of. In addition, I order one million Galleons compensation to the Gringotts account of Sirius Black, and two thousand Galleons to be added to the estate of the late Harry Potter. All possessions will be returned to Sirius Black, and all of Mr. Potter's possessions will be put in his estate as well." Fudge coughed and looked at the document in front of him. "In accordance with Mr. Potter's will, everything in his vault is to be transferred to the vault of-

“ here his eyes widened “-the Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles for the kindness he showed me in my time knowing him.”

Harry smirked. He was suddenly extremely glad that he had changed his will. At the unspoken question in Fudge’s voice, he spoke up, causing heads to turn to him. “I met Mr. Potter in the summer following his fifth year. I moved him to a better cell and tried to keep the Dementors away, though it would seem they did not follow my instructions.” He forced a glare. “Those responsible were taken care of accordingly. Mr. Potter was a good man.”

Mrs. Weasley let out a loud sob, and Mr. Weasley turned to comfort her. Harry mentally sneered. She certainly hadn’t been so upset at his trial- in fact, he thought with some humor, he distinctly remembered her slapping him. But he disgressed.

Fudge nodded, a bright red. “Indeed he was. A pity there was no way for us to see that.”

Harry nodded. “A pity,” he said blandly.

Sirius took the awkward silence that followed to transform, ignoring the reflexive screams when it was realized who he was as soon as his hood was down. He made a show of stretching. “Good to be able to walk around as myself again,” he said calmly. He glared at Fudge. “Wonderful to see you again, Fudgie.” The scorn was obvious in his voice. “I see you made the same mistake with my godson as you did with me.” His voice lowered to a near whisper, but in the sudden silence, there was no way not to hear it. “I hope you regret it.”

Fudge nodded quickly. “Of course, Mr. Black. Of course.” He hurriedly stood. “Well, it looks like we’re done here! Court dismissed!”

Harry and Sirius were some of the first out of the courtroom, and were immediately cornered by reporters.

“Lord Azkaban! You claim to have known Mr. Potter. Did you know of his innocence?”

“Mr. Azkaban! What’s your favorite class?”

“Lord Azkaban! Are you single?”

“Lord Azkaban-“

“QUIET!” Sirius roared. The silence was immediate and awkward. “Thank you.” Mel, Ari, Remus, and Snape made their way through the crowd to them while the noise level slowly picked up. They were on their way to the door when Dumbledore caught up.

“Lord Azkaban,” he said calmly. “I must insist that you return to Hogwarts immediately.”

Harry nodded. “Of *course* Headmaster,” he said with mock respect. “I’ll just go pick up my fellow students first. Farewell.”

Dumbledore smiled and turned to Sirius. “Well, congratulations I must say-“

Sirius snorted. “Would have happened a lot sooner if you had believed what Sn- Severus here had told you.” He smiled menacingly. “Which reminds me. I have a bone to pick with you. I distinctly remember you telling me when I rejoined the Order that there was absolutely no chance that Mel was alive and that you had never had any reason to think me innocent.”

Mel stepped in and put a hand on Sirius’ arm. “Let me handle this dear,” she said calmly. She stepped forward and slapped Dumbledore. The elder wizard put his hand up to his face and stared at her in shock. “You could have tried harder. I really do not doubt that. But you didn’t. And I know why. You knew I knew of Sirius’ innocence. You knew I would turn Remus and Sirius and Snape and... and Harry away from you. That I would show them the truth. That I would take Harry out of your grasp. Well, you know what you bastard? You did a fine job of that yourself.”

Dumbledore winced and Ari began to speak. “I understand that there was a body for me, but I don’t doubt you checked it for potions and spells even if you couldn’t reverse them. And you let my Remus suffer. I hate you.”

Remus sighed. "Albus... I trusted you. And you betrayed Sirius, and Harry... and Mel, and Ari, and even Severus and I. I can't believe you."

Dumbledore turned to Snape. "Severus, please..."

Snape glared at him. "Not a word. You let me think her husband guilty and her dead. I hereby quit the Order, and the only reason I'm not resigning is because I'm not about to abandon my students. You can find someone else to spy on the bastard for you."

He turned in a swirl of robes, followed quickly by the others and leaving Albus there, still clutching his cheek. "What have I done?" he murmured. "What have I done?"

**vgjkbvjkbdivjknvjksvjkbjkbdfdvuousdbvijudfbjkbvdjkbdivjkbfb
jdkvbjkdfnvjdf**

Nimi was pacing around anxiously. "Why couldn't we go?" she complained for the millionth time.

Nikolai sighed. "Because," he explained for the millionth time, "It's a private trial, and it should have been only the witnesses allowed to go, but Harry managed to pull strings because of his potion. He tried to get them to let us come, but they wouldn't allow it. And haven't I said this before?"

Luna nodded. "Yes."

Nimi sighed and proceeded to bang her head against the wall. She spoke between bangs. "Sorry-" BANG! "- just-" BANG! "- nervous-" BANG! "-can't really help it." BANG!

She heard laughter, and spun to find Harry, Remus, Sirius, Mel, Ari, and... Snape? She would think about that one later. Instead, she barreled forward and caught Harry in a hug. "I thought you were caught or something!"

And Harry laughed again, long and hard. "I don't have to worry about that anymore. And neither does Sirius." She looked at him uncomprehendingly for a moment before her eyes brightened and

she squealed, hugging him again before turning to her left and hugging Sirius. "I'm so happy for you both!"

Luna frowned. "Wait. You told them you were dead, Harry."

Harry shrugged, smirking. "Well then, isn't it convenient that I changed my will so that the Lord of Azkaban was the sole benefactor?"

Nikolai bit his lip. "So we're not going to tell them?"

He shook his head. "No, we're not. Not yet, at least. For one thing, I want to see how they react, and for another... I don't think I'm ready."

Luna smiled at him. "Don't worry, we won't say a word."

He smiled. "Thank you." His gaze turned to Snape. "I would discuss something with you, Potions Master."

Snape nodded and stepped forward. "Yes, my Lord?"

Harry made a face. "Azkaban, or Lord Azkaban at the most, please. I have a few questions for you."

Severus nodded again. "Whatever you need, my- Lord Azkaban."

He smiled. "First off... have you any doubts about the innocence of Harry Potter?"

Snape shook his head. "Even if it weren't for that verdict, I always thought it was somewhat fishy for him to turn, although I wasn't fully committed to his innocence when he was first convicted."

His smile widened. "Alright. If you could say something to Harry Potter now, what would it be?"

He let out a breath. "I would tell him... that I'm sorry for judging him by his father. He didn't deserve that. I would ask his forgiveness, and try to start anew."

Harry closed his eyes. "Just one more. With whom do your loyalties lie?"

Snape laughed. "Well, that's a very complex question. I am of the Death Eater ranks, but I've been spying on them for Dumbledore, and my loyalty is not to Voldemort. I work at Hogwarts, but after all that's happened, my loyalty is no longer to Dumbledore. In fact, I would have to say that if you'd allow it, my loyalty would be to you, Lord Azkaban."

Harry pulled down his hood. 'This is getting irritating,' he mused with a mental smirk that was in short order mirrored on his face. "I would certainly allow it, Professor Snape. Will you be spying for us or wishing to find a way to leave the Death Eaters?"

d f b n v k l d f n v k l n d s f k l v n k l d s f v n k l d f s n v l s d n v l k n d f k l v n s v l k n v l k d f n v k l n v l k s n d k v n k f n

"He was *innocent!*"

"And Remus t-told us!"

"And Luna! She was *right!* And *I* was *wrong!*"

"He told us, and we didn't listen!"

"We-"

"He-"

innocent!"

"-can't believe-"

"SILENCE!" Everyone turned to face Dumbledore, who had a look of remorse and pain on his face. "Silence. Indeed, Mr. Lupin and Miss Lovegood were correct. Clearly, we were wrong. But my friends... this means that is quite possible Harry was the Heir of the Six. Which means that it's rather impossible that we have a chance in this war."

There was a horrible quiet as this information sunk in, and Molly Weasley burst into tears once more. "Oh, it's just so horrible!" she bawled. "We sent H-Harry to Azkaban, and he's dead, and he died in that awful place thinking we didn't care, and now we might not be

able to defeat You-Know-Who, and... oh, it's horrible!" She dissolved once more into tears on her husband's shoulder.

Hermione looked up, tear tracks down her face. "And- and I hated Luna because I thought she was being foolish, and really she was right, and I was his best friend and I never saw..."

Ron patted her on the shoulder. "I should have seen too, Hermione. I mean, I absolutely hated him, and I couldn't see either..."

McGonagall blew her nose. "We should have realized," she agreed, her voice stuffy. "Made the same mistake with the godson as the godfather..."

Dumbledore sighed heavily, and a single tear rolled down his cheek and into his beard. And the worst part for him was knowing that he had thrown away his weapon and could no longer use it.

**hidowjsdfbgjsfjbjsdfvbjkdsbdjkbvfd.vbskjfbvkdfsnbvd fsbvjkdvb
dbvshjdbvbkhjjh**

..Flashback : October 1st, 1981:.

Remus Lupin's nerves were frazzled when he got out of bed that morning. She was gone. No one had seen her in almost twenty-eight hours. Something was wrong, he was sure of it. He didn't need to be a werewolf to sense it.

In a trance-like daze he took a shower, combed his hair, got dressed, ate breakfast, read the paper... the routine, he realized with a start, she and he had always stuck to in the mornings. He closed his eyes, remembering how he was rolled over that morning and been surprised not to find her warmth next to him, only to remember that she wasn't there.

With a heavy sigh, he picked up his briefcase and walked to the door to go to his job as a Muggle banker. Not the best job, but it worked. Or it would for now, until he got fired for missing too many days on the full moon. He hated being a werewolf.

Lost in his thoughts, he opened the door, and almost didn't notice it until he nearly tripped over it. An abject terror grasping at his heart, he found himself putting down the case and dropping down to his knees to slowly undo the white cloth wrapping...

He felt the tears and an inhuman wail burst free when he saw the face. Her face. With shaking hands, he checked for a pulse. But there was none. He buried his face in his arms, resting them on her. She was gone. She was really, truly gone. Dead.

He took another look at her blank, lifeless eyes and began to sob once more. They would never curl up after dinner to stare at the fire again. They would never have dinner together again. He would never kiss her goodnight again, kiss her goodbye as she left for work, hug her when he got home and then set the table while he watched her cook, her hair shining in the light of the kitchen...

Barely realizing what he was doing, he stumbled to his feet, carrying her, and made his way to the fire, shifting her to grab a pinch of Floo powder. He threw it into the fire, somehow managing to say a shaky "Number Fourteen, Godric's Hollow." James and Lily stood up from where they had apparently been having breakfast with baby Harry when they saw him.

"Remus?" James asked, sounding confused. "Remus, what..."

He gently lay her down on the floor and felt the tears still leaking out of the corners of his eyes. Suddenly, he was all too aware of his loose tie, mussed shirt, and messy hair. But it didn't matter. "They left her on our doorstep," he heard himself say, as though listening through water. "They... just..." The last thing he heard before falling into blessed darkness was Lily's screams...

..End Flashback..

..Flashback : June 28th, 1982..

"Please, Severus," came a tired voice through the darkness. "Please, take her to safety."

"But what about you!" he protested.

She laughed. "You won't be able to get us out before they switch the guard. It took too long, and they'll suspect why you didn't call for someone else to help anyways. I won't put your life in danger, Severus."

"But--"

"No," she said, her voice cold. "Promise me, Severus, that you'll take her to an orphanage, and not tell anyone of her but to Albus her last name; and swear to me that you'll tell him about Sirius too. Swear to me, Severus. Promise me."

There was a small sigh. "I promise, Mel. Goodbye."

"Goodbye, Severus." A small pop, and both he and the child were gone. The woman chuckled softly. "Do you think I picked a good name, Ari?"

"Definitely, Mel. I though you said you'd name any daughter you had Eliza, though?" The voice was teasing.

The first woman could be heard shuddering. "Oh, hell no, that was just what everyone said I would name her, because I said once I liked the name and someone asked me if I could picture myself naming a child that, and I said perhaps. Now though..." She shuddered again. "I still like the name, but Eliza Black? It doesn't fit. Especially Eliza Gemini Black. It just doesn't sound right."

"No," the second woman agreed, "It doesn't." And all was silent once more.

Timeline:

1960: The Marauders are born.

1971-77: Marauders go to Hogwarts,.

September 27th, 1978: Lily and James are married.

July 31st, 1980: Harry is born.

September 30th, 1981: Arianrhod is captured.

October 1st, 1981: Remus discovers Ari's 'body' on his doorstep.

October 10th, 1981: Mel is captured.

October 17th, 1981: The Potter's appoint a Secret Keeper; Sirius.

October 24th, 1981: The Potters switch Secret Keepers to Peter Pettigrew.

October 31st, 1981: The Potters are attacked; James and Lily die and Harry receives his scar.

November 1st, 1981: Sirius attacks Peter and is sent to Azkaban without a trial.

November 3rd, 1981: Harry is sent to the Dursleys'.

June 28th, 1982: Mel's daughter is born.

1991: Harry begins his first year at Hogwarts.

Chapter Twenty-Five: Begun By Blood

Severus Snape stared at him for a long moment before a smirk mirroring Harry's own spread across his features. "Whatever is better for you." The smirk abruptly disappeared, and was replaced with a look of sorrow. "H- Lord Azkaban, I-"

Harry waved it off. "It really isn't important, sir. Not a bit. I was never angry at you- while you were a bit of a smarmy git to me, if you don't

mind me saying so, that was a constant, and rather refreshing. No, if you would allow it, I would be honored to have you on my Council as Secondary Advisor and Hogwarts Liason because, you see, once I graduate from that castle I have little to no intention of coming back, least not while Dumbledore is there. What do you say?"

Snape shook his head and let out a short laugh before nodding and shaking Harry's outstretched hand. "I'd be honored, Lord Azkaban. You didn't answer me, though- will I be spying?"

Harry bit his lip. "As much as I hate to say it, I think it's the best course of action until I can find a way to sever the bond he put in place through the Mark. Do you mind?"

The Potions Master shook his head again. "Not at all. May I inquire, though, what happened to you? Everyone believed you guilty, and then dead."

"That's.... a bit of a long story. I'll give you the short version. Nimi, the girl who was banging her head when we arrived? She was a Lieutenant at the time of my arrest, and a few weeks later, stationed on patrol. She saw my hand glowing, and looked to find the Rune of Azkaban. She took me to the Hospital Wing, and they examined me and found I was the real Lord. I had to have an explanation for what happened to Harry Potter, so we said he died. That's the gist of it, really."

The other man nodded his assent. "So, it's off to Hogwarts then, is it?"

"Yes, but first..." Harry muttered something under his breath and waved his hand in the general direction of Snape. A moment later, the man was in the clothes of the Council of Azkaban. "Much better. Well, let's round everyone up..."

A few moments (and much arguing over whether Ari and Mel should stay behind) later, they had gathered the others, who had left during Harry and Snape's conversation, and were ready to go. With a whispered "Portus" and a finger on an old shoe, they were gone in a flash of silver light.

**guahvbijvhbjfdvbjdfvbjkdbvjkf vjkbjkd vbjkbkdbgujvgbdkjfvbbjkv
bdjkbvjkb sdv**

It was too late to return to classes that day, but it didn't matter; they were all called off in a day of mourning for Harry Potter. Harry himself sat in the Azkaban Common Room, chuckling under his breath at random points at the absurdity of the day. Not only had he been freed, the people who had once scorned him and claimed him a guilty imbecile were now weeping at his supposed 'death'.

Luna and Nikolai had gone into an attached room to work on their dueling skills, as they had wanted to level up to Harry, and the presence of Snape was required at the Great Hall ceremony, which left Sirius, Remus, Harry, and Nimi to sit behind; Mel and Ari had eventually been convinced to stay and help guard Azkaban, as Harry feared an attack. Voldemort was gathering strength, and he felt much safer with people he trusted at home.

So wrapped up in his thoughts was he that he jumped nearly a foot when Nimi tapped him on the shoulder. "Are you alright?" she asked softly. "You seem worried about something."

Harry reflexively looked around- Sirius and Remus were talking quietly in the corner, and other than that they were alone. He nodded to Nimi, and then towards the second spare room. She stood and walked in, shutting the door softly behind her. A moment later, Harry followed. After he cast an Imperturable Charm on the door, he turned to see her peering at him through the darkness.

"What is it?" she asked concernedly. "Something's wrong, I'm positive. You aren't usually this... well, depressed, I suppose."

He shook his head and gave her a small smile. "It's nothing serious. I've... A few minor visions have managed to get past my blockade... people are being hurt, Nimi. And I'm scared. I'm scared for everyone, for the Ministry, for Britain, for the world, and for our people... what if something happens and I'm not there to prevent it?"

"Oh Harry," she said, her voice laced with sadness. "You can't save everyone."

“I know,” he whispered. “And that’s what scares me.”

He was more than a little surprised when she crossed the room and wrapped her arms around him. He wasn’t exactly used to physical contact- the Dursleys’ had never initiated any when he was small, nor he with them, and few of his friends and those he would consider family had done so. He stiffened for a moment before uneasily wrapping his arms back around her. She squeezed him once before letting go and stepping back, and he was surprised to find that he was almost reluctant to have her do so. What...

He forced his thoughts away from that path and smiled at her. He could think on it later. For now, he needed to live in the present. The future could come when it would.

**gvnjkfndvlfknvklsvjkdsvbjbvjkdvjkbvjbjkdsfsvbjkdsbjksdfeghj
sfdvjkbjlcbsajkd**

Remus was staring at Sirius. “You... you have a daughter.” Sirius nodded. “And... and she’s...”

Sirius nodded again. “Yes. I just don’t... Mel wanted to be here to tell her, but she agreed that she should stay behind to continue to recuperate and help protect Azkaban, she said that if I had a chance, I should tell her... but how?”

Remus bit his lip. “I have to say I really don’t know, Padfoot. I’ve never dealt with something like this before. I think that you should definitely tell her though. She deserves to know, and I know that she’d love you. You’ll be a great dad, Sirius.”

The other man smiled. “Thanks, Moony.” A mischievous grin lit his face. “What about you? You realize the Werewolf Restrictions don’t apply to you anymore.”

Remus turned an odd shade of red and muttered something under his breath vaguely resembling “Hemeriditygibbitfer...” Sirius snorted and made to tease him further, but was cut off as a door opened and Luna and Nikolai stepped in, both rather red and sweaty, their wands hanging in limp hands.

“Whew!” Nikolai said, smiling. “I think we’re definitely improving.”

“Yes,” Luna added. “But we were wondering if Harry and Nimi were here, so that we could go against someone more experienced?”

Sirius suddenly looked up. “They’re not-“ He was cut off by Remus shaking his head.

“It’s alright, Sirius, I saw them go into the room there, looked like they wanted to talk about something.”

“Oh,” Sirius said, relaxing. He hadn’t even realized how tense he had become at the thought of a threat to the two teens. “That’s alright then.”

Harry and Nimi chose that moment to step into the room. Seeing all the heads swivel towards them, Harry immediately tensed. “Is something wrong? An attack?”

Luna hurried to correct him. “No, not at all; we were just wondering where you were.”

He relaxed a bit, though he still seemed tense. “Oh,” he muttered, a tinge of red appearing on his cheeks. “Sorry about that.”

Sirius spoke before the others could respond. “It’s fine. Harry. Not a big deal. Nimi, could- could I speak with you for a moment?” Remus shot Sirius an encouraging look as Nimi nodded, confused, and followed him out of the room.

“What was that about?” Harry asked, echoing the thoughts of all but Remus, who sat in his chair, looking for all the world like the cat who had just caught the canary.

**fehgwllkgvjekvhkfegnjkfefvbjksbjkvvdbkjdbkjsjfdsvbkjsd
fbvkjdsfbkjdfsvk**

Nimi looked up at Sirius as he shut the door on the room that she and Harry had just previously occupied. “What’s up, Sirius?”

His face was emotionless, she noticed, but his eyes were filled with an odd sort of fear. "I... what was life like for you, as a child?"

If she had been expecting anything, that wasn't it. "What?"

"It is important, I promise you. Just... who did you grow up with, what did you do... did you like your family... that sort of thing." It was the pleading look that she suddenly realized lined every inch of his face that made her comply.

"Well... alright. Though I really don't see why..." She sighed.

"I don't really remember my first year or so- that was when I was living with the Stardreamers, the people who adopted me. Their names were Joyanna and Michael. They had another adopted son about eight years older than me- that's my brother Apollo. They couldn't have children, so they were happy to adopt.

"Anyway, not long after, they were killed. So, I went to live with my brother at my aunt's house. I grew up a tomboy, not for lack of trying on my aunt's part, but I wasn't ever mistreated. I went to school, got good grades, and at age eleven was offered a spot in a pre-training Militia program.

"My aunt wasn't happy, but I accepted, and was eventually accepted into the actual Militia and went on to do that. My main home is at the Castle now, but I still have a room at my aunt's place." She looked at him suspiciously. "Now, will you tell me why you wanted to know?"

Sirius sighed, sat down, and rubbed his hand over his face. "Because my wife and I had a child."

"Oh! She would be older than Harry, I suppose?"

He shook his head. "Actually, almost two years younger. She was born when Mel was a prisoner. Severus- Professor Snape, the Potions Master? He was working as a spy in the Death Eater ranks and was put on duty right before she went into labor. He took our child away once Mel had named her, and brought her to an adoption agency."

A crazy idea was beginning to form in her head and she squashed it down. There was no way. "Why are you telling me this?"

He looked up at her. "Because Mel had named her before Severus took her. And she named her Nimi Gemini, who once she was adopted was named Nimi Gemini Stardreamer. Because, you see, that girl is you."

**dcvggvvgbjbvjkbdjvbdjvkbjksdfvbkjsbjsfbgv,mbjkdsbsjbkjsdbks
jdfbdfbvdbmfbvj**

"What news, Lucius?"

"My son has written, my Lord. He has declined joining our noble ranks."

A high pitched laughter echoed. "So young Draco thinks he will escape us? Send three of your best to tail him, and bring him to me. Perhaps I can find a way to make him reconsider."

"Of course, my Lord. Is there anything more?"

"Anxious to be away from this place, are we, Lucius?"

An audible gulp, and then-

"Never, my Lord. I merely wish to know how I may best do your bidding."

A wheezing chuckle. "Simply by not speaking when I do not request it, Lucius. Crucio!"

Screams echoed through the building, but in the town of Little Hangleton, nothing but a shiver disturbed the silent night.

**dvgkeflkjdfknsdlkfnjksdfbjksdjfkjsbfkjsbkjdfbjkdsfbjkbdfjkbdfjk
bdsjkfbjkdsfbak**

..:Harry's POV:.

I remember a time- it was a few days after I got home from Fifth Year, less than a month since Sirius had fallen. I went to the park across

the street. It was pretty nice- it had your typical swingsets, horsie swings, slides, monkey bars- nothing out of the ordinary.

That day was special, though. I was just sitting on the swing like I usually did, not really moving, just thinking. Thinking about how I had failed everyone, how it was all my fault. It really is, you know. If I had thought to use the mirror...

But like I said, that day was special, I was just sitting there when a man came up to me. He was in his mid-sixties, I would say- grey hair, slightly stooped walk, a limp in his left leg- but what really got me were his eyes. They were hidden behind large bulky glasses, but were a bright brown, not like the muddy color you'll sometimes see. They seemed to shine with a joke that only he knew, and to smile with all the joys of all the people in all the world.

He was carrying a pad of paper, I remember- an artist's pad, probably about 11" by 14". He walked over to me, and smiled, and sat on the swing next to me. I looked at him with idle curiosity, too depressed to truly move from my perch. And he flipped the pad around to reveal me.

I was sitting there on the swing, my head bowed in shame and mourning, my eyes peering out from under a fringe of hair. My whole posture was filled with pain and sorrow, and my eyes looked to the horizon- as though they awaited the coming of a ship sailing from the sea. The detail was amazing- my knuckles white from gripping the chains, my knees slightly bent and the tops of my tennis shoes skimming the dirt... and the too-big clothes on the too-small boy with glasses too large and too round for his angled face.

I remember his smile turning sad, and him ripping out the page, putting it into my shocked hands- and I remember him slowly and creakily getting up to leave, and turning over his shoulders to whisper parting words that I will never forget.

"A memory of could-have-been's is never as good as a dream of soon-might-be's."

And he continued on his way, never again looking back. That was how he lived his life, I now realize. Always looking forward, and never looking back. I wish that I could learn to do the same.

To try and prevent confusion, here's a quick timeline-

1960: The Marauders are born.

1971-77: Marauders go to Hogwarts,

1978: Lily and James are married.

July 31st, 1980: Harry is born.

September 30th, 1981: Arianrhod is captured.

October 1st, 1981: Remus discovers Ari's 'body' on his doorstep.

October 10th, 1981: Mel is captured.

October 17th, 1981: The Potter's appoint a Secret Keeper; Sirius.

October 24th, 1981: The Potters switch Secret Keepers.

October 31st, 1981: The Potters are attacked.

November 1st, 1981: Sirius attacks Peter and is sent to Azkaban without a trial.

November 3rd, 1981: Harry is sent to the Dursleys'.

June 28th, 1982: Nimi is born.

1991: Harry begins his first year at Hogwarts.

Chapter Twenty-Six: Catch It If You Can

Nimi stared at Sirius, her eyes wide with shock. She realized that her mouth was open, and closed it quickly. "Wh-what?"

"I- well, I understand if you want to keep living with your aunt as your guardian and everything... I mean, I imagine this is a bit of a shock..."

"A bit..." she echoed, staring. "I suppose it is, at that..." She was saved from responding further by Harry flinging the door open.

“Sorry to bother you,” he said grimly, “But I’ve had another scar vision. It was too strong for Voldemort to have sent it; he couldn’t have gotten through my blockade if he tried. I’ve strengthened it too much since the last time. It had to be accidental. We’re going to the Ministry.”

∴ Ministry of Magic : February 19th ∴

Harry sighed heavily and tapped his foot on the floor of the rather cramped telephone booth. “Names and business,” came a tinny, metallic voice. He raised an eyebrow. That was new. Apparently everyone had been tired of the obnoxious woman’s voice.

“Lord Azkazban, Nimi Stardreamer-“ he saw both her and Sirius look down at this, and made it a point to talk to them later “-Remus Lupin, Sirius Black, Luna Lovegood, and Nikolai Nadeski, here to battle Voldemort.”

“Thank you. Have a nice day.” The telephone booth began to sink as the machine deposited several badges. Harry passed them around before looking at his and chuckling with little real humor. “Lord Azkaban, Futile Attempt To Battle He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named. Either the Ministry has accepted it and still hates me, or this machine has a sense of humor.” Any would-be replies were cut off as the ride ended and the door opened to reveal a deserted room.

Harry immediately stepped into the room, hand held out before him. The others followed, wands up. Seeing no immediate danger, he walked forward. “If I was Riddle, where would I hide from me?”

It hit him. The place in the Ministry he would be least likely to go. Whether or not Voldemort had business down there, he was in the Department of Mysteries. His face paled. He couldn’t go back there. Not yet. But he had to. He owed it to his people. He had to try and eliminate the threat of Voldemort, whether or not he was comfortable with the setting.

“He’s in the Department of Mysteries,” he said certainly. “He doesn’t think I’ll go there.”

“But he doesn’t know who you are!” Sirius protested. “He can’t know what happened there.”

Harry shook his head. “No, he knows. He didn’t up until recently, but I’m sure he does now. He has a spy in the Order of the Phoenix, I’m certain of that. He thought that I was dead, as was the information. He assumed that I hadn’t gotten the image he sent to me about Diagon Alley before that happened, and that the Lord of Azkaban showing up was a coincidence. But he knows, now. He could feel me getting the vision this time, I’m sure of that. So he knows, even if he doesn’t know that Harry Potter is the Lord of Azkaban, that Harry Potter is here. And he’s in the Department of Mysteries.”

Sirius moved to say something again, but Luna spoke. “He’s right, at least that if Voldemortg knows he’s coming he’ll be in the Department. It’s one of the only places here that has any real maening for Harry, as far as I know.”

Harry nodded. “It is. And it’s the only place I really wouldn’t want to go in the Ministry. So he’s there, and I’m going. You can come or not.” To nobody’s surprise, they all followed him.

Around a corner, down the stairs... and they were in the spinning room. Harry closed his eyes briefly before walking forward. He paused as the walls turned, and walked through the only door he recognized- the one he knew they had taken last year that led to the hallway where it had all begun. Without a word, he stood in the hallway for a moment, silently debating, before turning into the room on his right- the Hall of Prophecies.

And he had been right.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

Ronald Weasley looked up from the essay he had stolen from Hermione to copy as McGonagall ran into the room. “Yes ma’am?” he asked politely. Perhaps if he was nice, she wouldn’t notice the essay...

She was too frazzled to notice anything, he later noticed. "Mr. Weasley, urgent Order business. go to the Headmaster's office, now. Miss Granger is already there."

He nodded and stuffed the essay into his pocket when she was turned before following her. Surprisingly he had a hard time keeping up with her. Something had to be extremely wrong.

As soon as he entered Dumbledore's office, his fears were confirmed. Mafalda Hopkirk, a newly initiated Order member, was sitting in a chair in the middle of the room, covered with blood. only about half of it seemed to be her own. She was talking under her breath to Dumbledore. Apparently they had just finished, as the Headmaster turned around with a grim expression.

"There is an attack going on at the Ministry of Magic." Gasps were heard, and Dumbledore waited for silence. "It began shortly after noon. The ministry was taken by surprise; they had no way to get a message out to Auror Headquarters, or anywhere else. Mathilda here managed to escape, and came to warn us as quickly as possible."

"What do we do?" Moody growled. "We can't just barge in there; they'll just kill any hostages they've taken and Disapparate."

Dumbledore sighed. "Exactly, Alastor. Which is the reason that we can't do anything at all."

"WHAT!"

This was the cry of all of the Order at that moment. It took nearly ten minutes for them to remotely settle down. "If you will listen to me," Dumbledore said calmly. "There is nothing we can do to help at the moment. There is no conceivable way for us to go in without doing any further harm. Now, I have sent Professor Flitwick to retrieve Lord Azkaban and his party so that they will not be able to cause further trouble and endanger innocent lives--"

Flitwick chose that moment to barge in. "Albus! They've gone!"

The castle shook with the Headmaster's fury.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

The Dark Lord turned as light appeared, hitting the backs of the new arrivals and causing eerie shadows to light the darkened room. He smirked. "Ah, Potter. I wondered when you would arrive."

"Tommy-boy," Harry acknowledged with a regal bow of his head. "I am pleased to inform you that I am here to kick your ass. It really has been too long."

Voldemort raised an eyebrow. "Much better. It really has been too long since I had an enchanting session of banter. And don't call me Tommy-boy."

"Whyever not? I see absolutely no reason not to nickname people. Think of it as a sign of affection from me to you. Of course, I would rather be turned into a Flobberworm and trampled by a herd of rampaging hippogriffs than show affection to you... but that's the way it goes."

"I assure you that the flobberworm and hippogriffs can be arranged."

"Really? That makes me ever so pleased. I was so afraid that that would never happen to me. My greatest desire in life, you see."

"Ah. You are aware that you sound like a primitive human stalling for time?"

"Yes, being primitive is so much fun. I would so love to take the time to sacrifice you to my heathen gods along with that goat I caught the other day, but I'm afraid I have prior engagements. Perhaps another time- I shall have to make sure to schedule it in my planner. For now, though..." A beam of red light shot towards Voldemort, who dodged out of the way before smirking.

"So that's the way you want to play? Very well then, this is one of my very favorite games, is it yours? ... I assure you I am the best at it. Crucio!"

Harry dropped and rolled down the stairs as his companions scattered behind him before hurrying into the room and engaging several Death Eaters. The battle was on. Harry quickly fired off another Stunner, a Petrificus Totalis, and a Lacarne Inflammatae before shooting up an Elementum Contego, bathing him in a bright golden light.

“Actually,” he shouted, “my favorite game is Scrabble!”

Riddle laughed. “Really! I shall have to arrange for you to play it in the afterlife!”

“I’ll meet you there, Tommy-boy! Kindly take I-95 to Hell for me, would you?”

“Only if I’m tailing you!”

“You’re always tailing me, Tommy-boy- it’s too bad you can never keep up!” He dropped the shield momentarily to send out several Cactae curses. Voldemort took advantage of this to fire off another Cruciatus- Harry barely managed to pull the shield back up in time.

Voldemort growled, dropping the mildly pleasant façade. “Enough of this! Crucio! Crucio! Crucio! Crucio!” The barrage continued, and the shield flickered. The one thought flashing across Harry’s mind at the moment was ‘Shit.’ The shield would fall momentarily, everyone else was occupied, and the instant the shield dropped one of the curses would hit him.

He hurriedly looked around, searching for anything that could be of help. Sirius and Avery chose to move their duel slightly to the side as Sirius advanced on Avery. Harry smirked, dropped the shield, and rolled.

He had, apparently, overcalculated his move; instead of landing to Voldemort’s right as he had planned, he continued going, bumping into a wall of prophecies on the far side of the room. One fell, and Harry reflexively caught it. He stared at it in shock, the small orb twinkling innocently in the light. “What in Dante’s nine levels...” He hurriedly shoved the globe back onto the shelf and rolled to the side once more in order to evade the Stunner Voldemort sent his way.

“Nice shot, Voldy!” he yelled. “You might want to correct your aim, it seems to be a bit to the left. No offence meant, of course.”

The snake man roared and yelled “Crucio!” This time, Harry’s luck was out. He let out an involuntary cry of pain as the spell hit him.

Nimi turned to him. “Harry!” she shrieked, rushing forward. She was caught by Rodolphus Lestrage, who held her with a wand at her head. Soon, the rest of the Azkabanians were in the same position, unable to do anything but watch Harry writhe with pain on the floor and listen to Voldemort laugh.

After a few minutes of this Voldemort delighted in casting spells to break both of Harry’s arms and legs in several places before using several cutting hexes. In short order, Harry was unconscious. With a final cackle, Voldemort Disapparated with a pop followed shortly by his Death Eaters, leaving four shocked faces and one sobbing girl to rush forward to the fallen hero’s side.

HeroVillainSaviourConqueroHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

Dumbledore stared at Flitwick, warring emotions flashing over his face. “Are you sure, Filius?”

“Positive, Albus!” the man squeaked. “I didn’t know the password, so I asked the suit of armor if anyone was in, and he said no. I didn’t believe him, so I checked that map we had Fred and George make. They’re nowhere on the grounds.”

Dumbledore slammed his hand on the desk. “Then they’re there,” he growled. “I do not know how he always seems to find out about these things, but somehow he does, and he is there. Of that, I am positive.”

“Are we going to get them?” Fletcher piped up.

Dumbledore ran a hand over his face. “No. We cannot. We can only trust them to hold their own. there is no way we can get in there without endangering people further. if they have not killed captives by now, they will once the Order arrives. Perhaps they have already

disposed of Lord Azkaban and his forces, but he had held his own before, and we must pray he will do so again. No, we cannot go.”

“So what can we do?” This was Hermione Granger, her face pale, a look of fear and hope on her face. “There must be *something*...”

The headmaster sighed. “The only thing we can do, Miss Granger, is alert St. Mungos that they must expect a rather large influx of patients soon, and tell Madame Pomfrey to be ready. A battle is about to end, and the survivors will need help.”

HeroVillainSaviourConqueroHeroVillainSaviourConqueroHeroVillainSaviourConquero

“Vigoratus! Rememdium! Redintegro! Harry James Potter don’t you dare die on me! Brachio Amendum! Brachio Amendum! BRACHIO AMENDUM! Propinquus vulnus! Lenio poena! Vigoratus! Rememdium! Redintegro! Redintegro! Rememdium!” Her spells were coming farther and farther apart, and her voice becoming weaker. “Harry, please... don’t you dare.... Rememdium... rememdium... brachio amendum... lenio poena... please... please...”

The strain too much, she finally passed out, landing on Harry’s chest. A silver light burst for a moment before fading as the others came to their senses and hurriedly grabbed the two unconscious teens before using Harry’s portkey to bring them to the Azkaban Hospital Wing.

∴ Hospital Wing : Caer Azkaban ∴

Sirius was pacing. Remus was sitting with his head in his hands. Luna had fallen asleep on Nikolai’s shoulder, the aforementioned boy staring at the ceiling and humming a sad tune under his breath. “I should have helped!” Sirius exclaimed for the millionth time. “I just stood there! I was such an idiot!”

Remus sighed, massaging his temples. “Sirius, we’ve gone over this before. None of us moved. We were all being fools.”

“And now,” Sirius continued, completely ignoring his fellow Marauder, “My godson and- and Nimi are lying in there, they could be dead for all we know, and it’s all my fault, I said I would protect them-“

Nikolai turned slightly to level Sirius with a look. "Mister Black, Luna has finally fallen asleep. It's rather refreshing to have her asleep on my shoulder instead of crying on it, so if you wouldn't mind saving the self-pity until later? Please?"

Any reply Sirius may have made remained unspoken as the door finally opened and an exhausted and amazed looking Helene stepped out. "What's going on?" Sirius asked immediately. "Are they alright?"

Helene shook her head. "They're both fine, for the most part, or at least they will be. But..."

"But?" the (awake) others chorused at once.

She shook her head again. "But... this is something I've never seen before, I don't know if it even has been seen by anyone in the last hundred years or so. It's... the Kraukenheim effect."

Sirius promptly passed out.

To try and prevent confusion, here's a quick timeline-

1960: The Marauders are born.

1971-77: Marauders go to Hogwarts,

1978: Lily and James are married.

July 31st, 1980: Harry is born.

September 30th, 1981: Arianrhod is captured.

October 1st, 1981: Remus discovers Ari's 'body' on his doorstep.

October 10th, 1981: Mel is captured.

October 17th, 1981: The Potter's appoint a Secret Keeper; Sirius.

October 24th, 1981: The Potters switch Secret Keepers.

October 31st, 1981: The Potters are attacked.

November 1st, 1981: Sirius attacks Peter and is sent to Azkaban without a trial.

November 3rd, 1981: Harry is sent to the Dursleys'.

June 28th, 1982: Nimi is born.

1991: Harry begins his first year at Hogwarts.

"blah" : Speech

..blah:. : Mindspeech

'*blah*' : Beastspeech

..*blah*:. : Parseltongue

Chapter Twenty-Seven: Bonded

Remus stared at Helene, ignoring the unconscious Sirius. "The... the Kraukenheim effect?"

Nikolai frowned. "Would someone please explain this?"

Helene sighed. "Perhaps we should wait until Lord Azkaban and Nimi are awake; it will be a bit of a long explanation."

Sirius groaned and sat up, while Remus responded. "It would be good to call Mel and Ari down as well, then."

The youngest of those in the conversation gently shifted Luna off his shoulder. "I'll go. You lot just take care not to wake Luna until you have to."

Without another word, he stood and began to run down the hallway towards the wing of the castle where the bedrooms could be found. Sirius looked at Helene dazedly. "For a minute there, I could have sworn you said Kraukenheim effect."

"I did."

He blinked rapidly. "You- you did."

"Yes."

"The Kraukenheim effect."

"Yes."

"Holy shit."

"My thoughts exactly."

Remus cleared his throat. "So, Harry and Nimi are under the Kraukenheim effect."

Helene sighed. "Didn't I just say that?"

The ex-lycanthrope had the decency to blush. "Well, yes. I'm sorry, just wanted to verify."

The blonde woman opened her mouth to give what would have surely been a scathing remark, but was cut off by the arrival of a panting Nikolai, Mel, and Ari. "Right," the nurse said, obviously still miffed. "Well, wake up the girl and I'll go in to wake the patients."

She stepped into the Wing and walked over to where the two lay oblivious and asleep in the beds closest to the back. She muttered two quick Enervates. Nimi came to first, blinking a few times before sitting straight up in bed, hand reflexively going for her wand. Harry followed seconds later with the exact same motions. The nurse sighed heavily. "It's alright, it's just me. The others should be in in a moment..."

Nimi jumped out of bed and threw herself at Harry. "Don't you ever scare me like that again!" she cried. "I thought you were dead!" She would have continued, but was cut off by an immediate influx of people and noise.

"Quiet!" Remus finally roared. Silence fell and all eyes turned his way. "I believe Madame Helene was going to explain?"

The woman sighed. "Indeed I was. Lord Azkaban, Nimi, are you at all aware of what happened?"

Harry spoke first. "The last thing I remember is being hit with a load of spells by Tom... I think I passed out then."

"You did," Nimi added. "I shot you a load of healing spells, and then I passed out." She cast a questioning glance at Helene. "Why?"

She sighed again. "Have either of you ever heard of something called the Kraukenheim effect?" Both shook their heads. "Well, it hasn't been seen as far as I know in ver a century... it was first discovered by Joshua Kraukenheim, hence the name. He was a Healer in the fifteenth century, and when his wife nearly died in childbirth, he ended up using so much magical energy in the spell that he used up all of his ready magic and began to involuntarily tap into his magical core.

"This was described by several witnesses as such: he passed out, and then both he and his wife were surrounded in some sort of glow. Others hurried to check them, and both were fine. When he awoke

and was told the tale, Kraukenheim immediately decided to research this phenomenon. What he eventually realized was this. He had used so much magic that it had caused a magical spike and briefly melded his and his wife's souls, or essences.

"This succeeded in involuntarily turning them into one essence for a moment. What that entailed was that ended up with all of the other's previous knowledge, magical abilities, and memories. When the essences separated, a strand remained connecting them, enabling them to speak telepathically with one another. This also caused the now divided mixed essence to hold the current health of both of them- in other words, both were slightly weakened instead of the wife being near death and Kraukenheim perfectly fine.

"In later years, it was found that the participating individuals already had to have some sort of emotional bond for the effect to work- husband and wife, brother and sister... any sort of connection. The two didn't need to be of opposite genders- there was a case when two brothers experienced the effect. Also, as there is no way to purposely use your magical core, there is no way to stimulate the effect, meaning that the entire process must not have been planned."

"This is all interesting," Harry said with a small frown creasing his forehead, "But what does it have to do with us? You don't think..."

"I very much think. In fact, I am positive. You two have experienced the Kraukenheim effect. Not only is it the only possible explanation for the fact that neither of you required much medical care despite Lord Azkaban's session, I also ran tests. No, there is no doubt about it- you two are bonded under the Kraukenheim effect."

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

Albus jumped out of his chair as his office fireplace lit up. A man stumbled through, and Rubeus Hagrid rushed forward to support him. "Gregory!" Dumbledore exclaimed. "What is going on?"

The other man looked up, his eyes bleak. "The battle's over," he said, his voice cracked. "Near's we can tell, they wasn't there to take hostages; Minister's dead." A few shocked gasps were heard, but not

many; this had been expected. “Umbridge too. Seems to be ‘bout eighty others. Nearly everyone is injured, mass panic, no one knows where’ta go.”

The Headmaster’s face held a determined gleam. “Send them either here or to St. Mungos.”

It was Gregory’s turn to shake his head. “Here’ll work, but Mungo’s is a’ready swamped. We’re gonna need another place, or there’ll be loads more dead.” His voice held no hope. The few smaller wizardign hospitas that would be close enough for people to get there in time had little to none of the technology that would need to be used on the majority of the injuries.

The Headmaster sighed and looked down, shaking his head. “Then there is no hope.”

It was McGonagall who spoke next. “Perhaps...” she said thoughtfully, slowly, “But perhaps not.”

“What is it, Minerva?” Albus’ voice was excited. At this point, any ideas were welcome.

“Well,” she said, biting her lip, “It is said that Azkaban has a rather large Hospital Wing...”

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Nimi stared at Helene. “So basically... we have all of each others’ knowledge, can mindspeak each other, and have all of each others’ abilities and memories?”

The nurse nodded. “Indeed. From the tests I’ve done, you’ve inherited a Parseltongue Ability, latent Beastspeak Ability, latent Metamorphagus Talent, and latent Elemental Abilities from Lord Azkaban, along with a Wandless Magic Talent through a focus rune that should appear on your hand. It won’t be the same as the Rune of Azkaban; it should be your Personal Rune.”

“Personal rune?” Sirius questioned.

“Yes,” the healer replied. “Every human being has a Personal Rune. For the Lord Azkaban, for example, it is the Rune of Azkaban. There are, in total, 527 Runes that can be a person’s Personal Rune, depending on their personality and life. I’m getting off track, though. Where was I?”

“What they’ve inherited,” Ari supplied.

“Right. Let’s see... yes. That’s all the magical abilities you’ve received from him, Nimi. Lord Azkaban, from Nimi you’ve gotten an increase in your latent Fire Elemental as she has latent Fire Elemental Ability, the Talent of True Sight, a latent Multi-Animagus Talent, a latent Shadow Walker Ability which should add to your Dark Elemental, and a latent Healing Talent. I believe that’s all...”

“What does latent mean?” Nikolai questioned.

Mel answered. “The average witch or wizard has two to four latent abilities, abilities that are only unlocked through a great magical shock. Would this qualify?”

Helene nodded. “It should. In a week at the most and a few hours at the least, they should be noticing the latent Abilities and Talents.”

“I don’t mean to bother,” Luna interjected, “But what’s the difference between an Ability and a Talent?”

This time, Remus answered. “As I understand it, a Talent is a greater skill in an area that any witch or wizard can develop, while an Ability is being able to use a power that is rarer and not common to every wizard and witch. is that correct?”

“Yes,” Harry and Nimi said at once before looking at each other oddly.

“I think that was mine,” Nimi said uncertainly.

Harry snorted. “I’m positive it was. I may have read a lot in the last few months, more than usual, but I haven’t read or heard anything describing that. Definitely yours.”

Helene started. "Someone's trying to reach me. i trust you'll all be fine in here for a few moments?" At answering nods, she hurried into her office and shut the door.

Nimi leaned back into Harry's pillow and ran a hand through her hair. "Well, this really has been the day of surprises. I don't even know what half of those are."

"Welll," Mel said, "I'm a True Seeress as well, have you used that before?"

Nimi frowned, and then shook her head. "I don't believe so. I may have had a True Dream once or twice, but I'm not sure. I know what True Seeress' are, but I'll talk to you if I have any questions."

"Same here," Harry added in. "What's a Shadow Walker?"

"I can transport myself through Shadow, basically," the girl laying next to him on the bed replied. "I have to be able to see where I'm going, though. It's a bit like Apparation, I suppose, but silent and quicker."

"I knew that," Harry said with a frown. "I mean, I just realized that I knew that, but I knew that. Of course, that's rather obvious, as I have all of your memories..."

"Should we try to Mindspeak?" Nimi asked him. They didn't notice the others slowly filing out of the room at Luna's lead. "Do you have any idea how?"

"Maybe if I try to send a thought *at* you... I mean, that's always what you read about in fiction, isn't it?"

She smiled. "It is, at that. Alright, do you want to try, or shall I?"

He smiled back. "You try first, and then I'll try to reply if it works."

"Okay." She took a deep breath and let it out slowly. "Right."

A few seconds later, a thunderous voice echoed in his head. .:CAN YOU HEAR ME:.

Harry winced and reflexively put his hands over his ears. "Could you possibly tone it down a bit? I think you may be trying too hard."

Blushing, she did as he asked. ".:Is this better:."

".:MUCH. I HAVE A FEELING THIS IS TOO LOUD THOUGH.:
Stifling a giggle, she nodded. ".:Right. Is this good:."

".:Perfect. Do you have any idea why Helene left:."

".:No, none. You:."

".:No. This is decidedly cool, though.:."

".:Very much so. I somehow thought it would be harder than this.:."

".:Well, Helene did say the reason we could do this was because our essences were wtil somewhat attached, so it makes sense thaqt we can communicate so easily, really.:."

".:I suppose you're right. Oh, Nimi, I wanted to ask you. In the telephone booth-:."

Whatever Harry had planned to say was never said as Helene burst into the room from her officed, looking distraught. "Lord Azkaban, Headmaster Dumbledore needs your OK to send patients here from the Ministry battle; St. Mungos is swamped, and Hogwarts won't be able to hold enough."

Harry immediatedly nodded. "Of course. Nimi, looks like it's time for us to test that Healing Talent."

They both got up and stretched in an eerie unison. The nurse shook her head to clear it before running back into the office, presumable to tell Dumbledore to send the patients. Harry pulled his hood up, while Nimi chose to leave hers down, and with a quick charm Harry had remade the bed. Nimi was brushing her hair and Harry straightneing his robes when the first few people arrived through the Floo moments later.

The next few hours were a blur. Nimi vaguely remembered the others returning at the commotion and helping, and Harry flashing her reassuring smiles every so often and her flashing him a few in return. The whole remainder of the day seemed to be a disturbing mosaic of blood, bones, burns, wounds, spells, and exhaustion. She noted that the Healing spells seemed to take less out of her than usual; perhaps that was part or all of the Healing Talent. She didn't know, nor did she truly care. By the time ten o'clock had rolled around and all those patients remaining overnight were stable, all she wanted to do was pass out.

So she did.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

Hundreds of miles away in a town called Little Hangleton, a Dark Lord addressed his Inner Circle.

"We know now for fact that I, nor any of you, am the Heir of the Six. Does anyone have any ideas on who it may be? And if anyone says Meliara Fillibuster-Black, I will strangle them. I have had enough of her to last a lifetime." The voice was an angry hiss, with a slightly pleased tone behind it. He had beaten Potter, after all.

"M-my Lord," A rat-faced man squeaked. "I-I was watching your duel with the Potter boy, my Lord, and I saw- my Lord, he knocked down one of the Prophecies when he hit the shelf. And my Lord, h-he caught it."

Any and all pleasure in the Dark Lord's voice when he murmured the word "Crucio" and the screams of a man with watery-blue eyes echoed throughout the Riddle house.

Chapter Twenty-Eight: Child of Prophecy, Child of Light

Nimi blinked and came to, surprisingly, in her room. Idly wondering how she got there, she sleepily got out of bed, grabbed some clean clothes, and headed into the shower. Once she was dressed, she reached for her hairbrush only to drop it in surprise. A rune was on the palm of her left hand.

It wasn't that she hadn't expected it, with what Helene had said, but she hadn't expected it to pop up so quickly. She had thought it would take a while longer, though the nurse had said they could expect changes in as soon as a few hours.

She found herself staring at it. It reminded her somewhat of Harry's, though really only in the silver color. The closest thing she could describe it as was an oddly shaped seven pointed star, with lines drawn from each point to the one across from it and a sort of starburst in the middle. She blinked a few more times before shaking her head and picking up her hairbrush. Or, rather, levitating it to herself.

When she realized what she had done, she dropped it in shock. The Wandless Magic seemed to work at least partially as a conscious wish for something, she reflected. Trying to do it on purpose this time, she managed to raise the hairbrush to her hand. Smiling, she began to brush.

Once she had finished and tied her hair into a sloppy bun, she went into her room and pulled on her robe before making her way to the informal dining room. She walked in and realized belatedly that she was the last one there. She sat down at the table, covered her mouth while she yawned, and served herself some of the food on the table as conversation picked up again.

"Yes, I know who the spy in the Order is," Harry was saying. "That's why I need to talk to the Bumblebee. That, and I think that it's about time to reveal who I am to the world, as Voldemort will probably put it together rather quickly with the informant's information and the fact that he didn't see an extra person there that could be Lord."

"Do you know who the informant is?" Sirius questioned.

"Yes, it's-" Nimi replied without thinking before looking to Harry with scared eyes. "*Him?*"

Harry nodded and sighed heavily. "I didn't want to believe it either, but looking over his personality I could. He would be the perfect choice, really; people don't pay him all that much attention, and he knew me pretty damn well. Obviously not as well as a lot of people, but well enough. And he is rather high up..."

"Wait a minute," Remus said slowly. "You're saying the informant is-"

Whatever he would have said was cut off as a guard poked her head in the door. "Excuse me Lord Azkaban, but an Albus Dumbledore is here- he says you requested his presece?"

Harry nodded, wiping his mouth and pulling up his hood. "I did indeed. I'll meet him in the Throone Room in five minutes; have him take the long way."

The woman smirked and nodded, striding out of the room. He could, a few seconds later, hear her voice speaking through a comm: "Alright Freddy, it's a 342. Make it the long long way." Her satisfied chuckle echoed down the hall as she continued on her way.

Harry smiled and took a last bite of toast before making to leave. Ari stopped him. "Harry, how many of us do you want with you?"

He paused; he hadn't really considered it. "Well, I assumed asll of you would come, if that's alright." He then frowned. "Where's Snape?" This question was directed to Mel, as she would be most likely to know.

"He wasn't assigned to go to the Ministry," she said softly. "Tom asked him to stay behind to brew more Potions for those Death Eaters that would be injured in the battle. He got in late, he's probably still asleep."

Harry nodded. "Let him rest then, we'll fill him in later. Well, tally ho, I suppose."

∴ Azkaban Throne Room ∴

Harry had just arrived and was seated on the Throne with the others in elegant chairs to his sides when Dumbledore entered. The old man looked mildly angry, and partially relieved.

"Lord Azkaban," he said, "I wish to thank you for your help after the battle. While I did tell you not to leave school grounds, I am rather grateful you did, as you were able to offer Healing services. I thank you profusely for this—"

"And where were you at the battle?" he questioned. "I assumed the Order of the Phoenix would be there."

"There was no way to get in without the Death Eaters being alerted and killing any prisoners they already had taken."

"Funny," Harry said thoughtfully, "We managed to get in just fine, and we didn't see any prisoners."

The elder man coughed. "Yes well... may I inquire as to why you wished to see me, my Lord?"

Harry pinched the bridge of his nose, deep in thought. "Several reasons, actually. First off, there is a spy in your Order."

Dumbledore sighed. "Yes, I am aware of this."

"Are you aware of who it is?"

"No," he said, shaking his head. "If I was, they would have already been kicked out. Why?"

"Because I am."

The Headmaster's eyebrows shot up into his hair. "Really? Do you have proof?"

"I do," Harry said with an inclination of his head. "I installed several scrying spells throughout Hogwarts; he has, several times, snuck into an abandoned classroom to use the fireplace and contact his master."

“His?”

“Yes. The informant is Percival Ignatius Weasley.”

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

Draco Malfoy looked over his shoulder as he made his way through Hogsmeade. Despite the calm exterior, he was panicking. He had no idea why he had done it. He had been raised to be a Death Eater, it had been his life's goal. Perhaps it had been Lestrangle's trial, the pleasure in her voice as she spoke of torture and death. Maybe it was because of the self-righteous words he always heard, especially from Potter; maybe they were finally making an impact. Maybe it was on finding out that he had an Aunt that he never knew about that had been tortured in his basement for years. He wasn't really sure on anything but that it was something.

When his father had asked him, it was his first thought to say yes. He had been so shocked to find himself saying no, running from the room... he couldn't turn to Dumbledore, that much was sure. The man was as bad as Voldemort in his own ways. While Voldemort was a hypocrite trying to wipe out his own kind, Dumbledore was only interested in power and fame. They were truly two sides of the same coin.

Why was he supposed to hate Muggles and Muggleborns so much anyways? The idea had been brewing in his head for a few years, but squashed down by his hatred of Granger; he really didn't see why she was a Gryffindor. But, weren't all people people, whether or not they had magic or were pure of blood? Maybe, maybe not. That was why he was so confused.

Dumbledore, Voldemort, Potter, and the Lord Azkaban. All were halfbloods. What he would consider the four most powerful wizards of the age, and none of them were pure of blood. Surprisingly, he didn't know of any amazingly powerful witch, but he had seen the Nimi girl in dueling class, and she seemed pretty good. Same with Luna and, as much as he hated to admit it, his arch-rival Hermione Granger.

Perhaps she was why he had continued to hate Muggleborns so much. Not because she was a know-it-all bitch, but because his father greatly disliked it when she beat him in grades, which was all of the time. And when his father greatly disliked something to do with Draco, he tended to take his anger out on Draco in the form of pain.

His thoughts were in a jumble, but one thing remained clear to him. He could not turn to the 'Light' or the 'Dark', and there was only one thing for him to do- he must go to the 'Grey'. He only hoped that the Lord Azkaban would not turn him away.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Albus Dumbledore stared at the young man in front of him. "Percival Weasley?"

Harry nodded. "Indeed. Of course, he's only been communicating from Hogwarts just after Order meetings... I understand that he joined the Order about four months ago?"

Dumbledore nodded, still shocked. "Yes... yes he did... Percy Weasley, I never would have thought..." He shook his head. "Well, I shall take care of that immediately. You said you had something else to talk to me about however?"

A bell rang and an oddly familiar boy tumbled out of the fireplace, sputtering. When he looked up, Harry held in a gasp. Malfoy. The boy looked as shocked to see Dumbledore as Harry was to see him. "P-Professor sir! I- I was coming to see the Lord Akzaban..."

"Why don't you wait outside," Dumbledore said kindly. "We had something to finish discussing."

Harry had no idea why he said what he said next- he supposed it had something to do with the odd feeling of *wrongness* in his stomach. "No, he can hear this to- it'll be out in the Wizarding World by this afternoon." He could feel the stares of his surrogate family behind him, and he sent a brief thought to Nimi. .:Do you feel it to:.

In a split-second, her response came. „I do. I understand, and we can explain to the others later. I think it has something to do with the True Sight, but I’m not sure.„ He sent her a mental nod before continuing.

“What I am about to reveal will prove that I did, indeed, lie to you Albus Dumbledore. Not without good reason, but a lie nonetheless. You see, Harry Potter is not dead. He cannot be, because I am Harry Potter.” He pulled off his hood, and all of a sudden, his load seemed somewhat lighter. Yes, there was a Dark Wizard after his blood, yes the Wizarding World had turned their backs on him, yes there was this bond with Nimi, and yes there was the mystery of him catching the prophecy the night before, but he no longer had to hide his face. He could be who he was without fear of retribution, and the world could just go screw themselves.

Dumbledore looked at him in shock, as did Draco... but there was something behind the other boy’s. Dissapointment, perhaps? As odd as it sounded, he was almost sure that that was the case. He shook his head slightly, though, and turned his attention back to Dumbledore. “I have nothing to say to you other than that my friends and I are going to be studying and will wish to take the NEWT’s by the end of this week so that we can graduate early. Goodday, Headmaster.”

“Wait, Harry-“

“You losty all right to call me that when you betrayed me,” he said calmly. “And yes, I understand the Veritaserum, but you were pushing for my guilt before that. Besides, that was just the straw that broke the camel’s back. You will do anything and sacrifice anything to destroy Voldemort, and I cannot abide by that. What you do with your life is your business, but throwing away others’ is not. Goodbye, Headmaster. Remus, Sirius, would you kindly show him out?” The two looked unhappily at him, no doubt wanting to see what happened with Draco, but nodded, and pulled the stock-still Dumbledore out of the room with little resistance from the old man.

Once the doors had shut, Harry turned to Draco. “Now, Mr. Malfoy. What can I do for you?”

Draco reddened slightly. "Er... well... Look, Potter- Lord Azkaban- I know we've never really been on the best of terms, and yes I was a bigoted git, and I'm not sure if I still am or not... not really sure of anything anymore..." the last bit was muffled, "But I came here to ask for the Lord Azkaban's help. I highly doubt you'll give it to me, now that I know who you are, but... I'm in a bit of a dilemma."

"How so?" Harry asked, eyebrow raised.

Malfoy Jr. sighed. "The thing is... a few days ago, my father came to me and asked me to join the Dark Lord's ranks... and I turned him down."

Mel moved to rise, but Ari tugged her down. Both looked an odd cross between thoughtful and angry. "He never did join his father," Ari said calmly. "That is the truth. He never did anything to us, we never saw him around."

Harry nodded. "He is telling the truth. I told Dumbledore before Sirius and Remus and I went to rescue you that I have a slight talent at Legilimancy; that's true." .:Did you get that too:. Harry asked Nimi. .:Because I just realized that Helene didn't mention it:.

..I probably did; it would probably fall under inheriting your abilities, not your magical talents, as that's more a technique than anything else:.

..True:. "As it is, I can tell you that Mr. Malfoy is telling the truth; he did turn down his father's offer." He looked to Draco. "What I'm not sure of is why."

Malfoy smiled weakly. "Me either. I do know that Voldemort's a bloody halfblood hypocrite-" here Mel began to choke and cough and Ari had to pound her on the back "-and that I could never trust Dumbledore. Really, that means that unless I stay neutral, my only option in this war is joining you. And sweeing as how I'll probably end up dead if I stay neutral, I'd like to formally request your protection."

..What do you think:.

She paused for a moment before replying to him. .:I think that he'd make a good ally. I wouldn't place him on your Council, but maybe induct him into the Order of the Patroni and have him for advice there. Use some sort of Blood Contract though, just in case. Have him stay in the Living Wing with guards outside.:.

.:To protect him, or protect us:. It was a weak attempt at humor, but her response was anything but.

.:Whichever needs protecting.:.

Harry mentally nodded to her once more before looking to Mel and Ari. "Are you two alright with this? He'd be staying in the Living Wing, *with guards*," they looked at him knowingly at this, "And be under an High Azkabanian Blood Oath before being told anything."

Both nodded, and Mel spoke. "Yes. I won't hold him responsible for his father;s crimes, much as I'd like to. But if he makes one wrong move, he's screwed." Ari nodded once more, and Malfoy visibly gulped.

Harry nodded. "Very well then. What's your middle name?"

Draco looked confused, but nonetheless answered "Morgan. Named for Morgaine LeFay, actually."

Harry nodded, forcing down a smirk. "Draco Morgan Malfoy, I hereby grant you protection and shelter for the remainder fo this war and however long is deemed necessary by me, Harry James Potter, Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles, afterwards. Do you accept?"

A smile broke across the other boy's face for the first time in the conversation. "I most assuredly do, Lord Azkaban. Thank you."

HerovillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

Albus Dumbledore sighed as he adressed the quiickly called Order. "It has come to my attention that there is a spy in our midst... And I know who it is."

A red haired man gulped. "Who is it, Professor?"

The man sighed, looking older than ever. "You, Percy."

And amidst Molly's waterworks, the Order's hysteria, and the other Weasleys' denial, Percy Weasley smiled. He had accomplished his duty. His Master would reward him greatly.

Chapter Twenty-Nine: The Beginning of an End

A few moments later, once the Order's Aurors had dragged Percy to the Ministry and things had somewhat calmed down, Dumbledore spoke again. "I am afraid that I have another piece of news to relate, involving Lord Azkaban and Harry Potter." Molly wailed, and Arthur patted her on the back.

"What is it, sir?" Hermione asked. "Is this about why Harry left everything to him?"

Albus sighed. "Indeed, Miss Granger. When Lord Azkaban called me today he told me about the traitor-" another sob from Molly "-and one other interesting piece of information that he said the Wizarding World would hear about by this afternoon. Harry Potter is alive." To his surprise, there was not an immediate influx of noise, but of silence. All stared at him in shock. He sighed again. Today was far too long.

"Yes. Harry Potter is alive, and he is none other than the Lord Azkaban."

At this point, the silence ended and the shouts could be heard throughout Hogwarts.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

Harry looked up and smirked. "Think he's told them by now?"

Nimi punched him in the shoulder. "Yes, that was definitely what that noise was. But we were working on Shadow Walking!"

He had the decency to blush. "Sorry. Okay, so I look at where I want to go and concentrate on being there, right?"

She nodded. "But don't forget to meld into the shadow first."

"Right. Got it." He screwed up his nose in concentration. "Okay, here goes nothing..." An instant later he was in the shadow of the bookcase on the other side of the room. She stared at him.

"That's not fair! It took me weeks to do that!"

He laughed. "Well, I do have the unfair advantage of all of your experience."

"True. As it looks like you've got that, what should we try next?"

He bit his lip. "Parsltongue? We can just make sure you've got it- it shouldn't be that difficult." She nodded, and he muttered "Serpensortia."

A green snake appeared. *..:Stop:..* Harry hissed. *..:My friend wishes to try and speak, if that is alright:..*

The snake inclined its head. *..:Of course, Ssspeaker:..*

Harry nodded to Nimi, who took a deep breath. *..:Is this right:..*

The snake laughed. *..:Indeed Speaker. If my purpose is done, may I be sent back to my kin:..*

..:Of course:.. Harry replied, and sent the countercurse at the snake. He turned back to Nimi, who still looked mildly surprised.

"I didn't think that would be so easy."

Harry shrugged. "Well, we do have all of each other's memories. Which reminds me- what do you think about Sirius?"

She sighed and sat down. "Well, I mean, I've always known I'm adopted, so it's not some sort of great shock, and he is the sort of person I'd love to have as a father, and I could easily picture Mel as a wonderful mother, it's just... I'm still trying to get over the surprise of it, I suppose. Speaking of revelations, why didn't you tell me the Prophecy?"

He let out a tight breath. "I didn't want him to target you for knowing. I don't want to see you hurt."

"I know what you mean, but I still wish you would have told me."

"I know."

There was a moment's silence before Nimi spoke again. "You're worried because you caught that Prophecy."

He waited a moment, then nodded. "Yes. I mean, anyone can touch a Prophecy once it's off the shelf, but wouldn't it have not rolled off if it hadn't involved me?"

Another silence before- "Harry. You saw what it said."

"Yes."

"That whole wall was of prophecies of one person, of the 'Heir of the Six'. You know who that is, you know what this would mean. And here I'm just guessing, but you know it's true as you had Elemental abilities in every single Element."

He squeezed his eyes shut. "I really don't want this to be true. I really, really don't."

She was kind, and her voice was soft, but it still bore the hard, cold truth. "This could be the power the Dark Lord knows not."

"Either that, or our bond. Do you think this means that in all technicality, we're both the Heir?"

She sighed and shook her head. "I think that it means that I have the powers of the Heir of the six, but not his destiny."

"It doesn't matter, because you and I both know that your and my destiny lie side by side."

She reddened slightly, and nodded. "I know. The bond connects us, and to tell the truth I'm rather grateful."

He smiled softly. "You know I would have stayed by your side with or without the bond."

"I know," she said quietly. Suddenly feeling awkward, she cleared her throat. "Right. Ah, I suspect Bestspeaking is like Parseltongue, so let's try the Metamorphagus?"

Almost reluctantly, he nodded. "Sounds good. Tonks actually described what to do to me once when I asked her; all you need to do is..."

The next three days were spent developing talents, training with new abilities, and studying. And studying. And studying. Nimi and Luna were both very insistant that getting all O's on the NEWTS would benefit them greatly, and as much as they hated to, Harry and Nikolai had to agree. So, on Friday, they took the NEWTS; all felt that they did pretty well, even if it was a nerve-wracking experience.

On the fourth day Harry felt the wards fall.

It wasn't an unusual day; he, Nimi, Luna, and Nikolai were comparing NEWT stories while sirius and Remus talked in the corner. And then he had felt it. It was a truly horrible sensation, like having a bucet of ice cold slime poured over you and being lit on fire all at once. He could feel himself stiffen, and saw Nimi do so as well. Idly wondering if his posession of the wards had been split with her as well, he turned to look at Sirius and Remus who, seeing the disturbance, had almost immediately hurried over.

"What is it?" Luna asked.

And in one voice, Harry and Nimi replied. "The wards have fallen."

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Mel and Ari were already in the strategy room when they arrived. Mel turned to look at him, having just finished off a conversation with someone on the comm; Ari was still using one. "Good, you're here. We've got what looks to be about four hundered humans, twenty three vampires, four giants, and two trolls. I've already talked to General Azback, he's moving the Death Eater prisoners to a safer location. Ari is on the phone with the Chefin of the Zauberzeilichs, and she just got off with the Unsagbar. The Unsagbar are on their way, hopefully the Zauberzeilichs will be too."

Harry nodded, his countenance grim. "Right. I want you to contact the Magiciers and the Indicibles, see if they'll help. Luna, call the

Cheftan of Inter-Species relations; tell them that Lord Azkaban request two hundred merpeople in a perimeter around the Isle with special concentration on the-“ he glanced at the tactical map “-southeast side, along with as many grindylows as they can get, same formation.”

“Got it,” she said, hurrying over to a comm console. Harry turned to the others.

“Sirius, I want you to contact the Head of the Aurors and the Unspeakables; I want them with us if at all possible. Remus, once all of the contacted officials get here, I want them set up in the perimeter buildings along the waterfront with concentration on the-“ glance at the map once more “-southeast Druid hospital and the abandoned warehouse a few blocks away, the one that used to be for storing weapons. Nikolai, contact the Militia Chair, tell him we need as many as possible to do as I instructed Remus to tell the others, along with Stun Bombers in the upper floors with concentration in those two buildings and the same for chuters on the rooftops.”

He turned to nimi. “Nimi, I need you to help me with strategy. We’ve both got the knowledge now, let’s put it to work.” She nodded and they moved towards the center of the room and the display map in the center. Their voices could be heard as murmurs over the noise in the hectic room, murmurs of “Twenty there, maybe?” and “We’ll want the ex-werewolves for that...” Every so often, one of them would call out to give a command, and the others would hurry to follow it.

“Seven minutes, Harry!” Sirius called. The Lord Azkaban nodded.

“Alright. Remus, Nikolai, are they set up?’ Two nods. “Good. They all agreed to come?” More nods. “Perfect. Mel, contact the Bevmagiska and Outsäglig, see if they’ll come, we’ve had a shaky treaty with them for a while. Ari, either get him yourself or send someone to get Draco and bring him down here, I don’t trust him; I don’t want him to end up running out into the battle and joining in with the Death Eaters. We’ll need a guard or two here as well, so bring them.” The blonde woman nodded and sprinted out of the room.

“Luna, what’s the deal with the Inter-Species?”

“We’re good to go.”

“Good.” He and Nimi both stiffened once more. “That was the close proximity wards falling, it should take them about five minutes to get through the last set, they’re the most complex. I’m going to work on putting more into them; anyone who’s joining in the fight, I would recommend getting down to join the officials. Mel, did we take care of civilians?”

His godmother nodded. “They should all be in the basements of the Castle by now. I just got off with the Bevmagiska and Outsäglig, they should hopefully be here in time.”

“Excellent. It’s been great guys; if we don’t make it, I want you all to know that you’re wonderful. Good luck.” He closed his eyes to concentrate on the wards, and the others slipped from the room to join in the upcoming fight. He had assumed they were all gone, so he was surprised when he felt a familiar tendril of power nervously join in the fray. “What are you doing?” he asked, eyes still shut.

Her answer was brisk. “Since the bonding, half of the power of the wards went to me, which means I can help strengthen them.” He nodded, even though he knew she couldn’t see him, and continued pouring in everything he had. he only hoped it would work.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

Dumbledore looked down at the results in his hand. “Well, there is no way to keep them from graduating now that they’ve taken them and especially since they’ve done this well,” he murmured. All O’s, for all of them. There was no hope of holding Potter back any longer. Stupid boy. Couldn’t he see that Dumbledore just wanted to protect him? That all he wanted was this fight won? Why couldn’t he understand it?

He looked up as Minerva walked in, and smiled. “Ah, Minerva. Wonderful to see you. Lemon Drop?”

She looked at him with grim eyes. “The boy and his friends are gone again.”

Albus sighed. Why could life never be easy? Why could no one see that he was just doing what he had to, what no one else could? "Of course. Did you check the map?"

"Yes sir." Respectful. He deserved respect, with all he'd done. It was nice to get it from someone.

"Thank you Minerva; why don't you get back to your classroom, I believe you have a class starting in a few minutes." She nodded and left, the frown never leaving her face. He sighed heavily and kneaded his hand against his forehead. Why was it that so few people looked up to him, when so many should? He only did what was best for people, as they could never seem to do it themselves.

He raised himself to his feet, bones creaking, and looked out the window. A beautiful day. He could almost fool himself into believing there was nothing wrong with the world.

How wrong that assumption would be.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

They held them for as long as they could, but in nine minutes the final wards fell. They chanced a final look at the tactical map, causing Nimi to use her earring to comm Sirius and tell him to retrieve all troops to the southeast side. Then they were on their way.

Luna had entered with Draco a few moments before, and he was still inside with several guards who were watching the map along with the Death Eater's child. He had protested at first, but finally given in. So here they were, Nimi and Harry, on their way, running to catch up to the battle that had not yet begun.

"Do you think this will be the last?" Nimi asked as they raced down the halls. "The last battle, I mean?"

Harry frowned before shaking his head. "No, I don't. Well, it possibly could be, but I don't think it is. He hasn't attacked Hogwarts yet. I'm not sure when, but he will. Unless I stop him tonight. That's possible, if mildly unlikely. I'm not sure if I'll even get to face him, with as many

people as he brought. Of course, we have just as many if the Danish get here in time..." The conversation ended as they exited the Castle and ran through the streets.

Harry moved to duck into the Hospital's back entrance, but Nimi grabbed him by the shoulder and pulled him behind the building next to it. "What?" he asked her.

"Stealth doesn't matter anymore," she thought grimly. "They're here..."

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

Voldemort was leading the army. Surely, a huge surprise. Not.

"Potter!" he called. "I know you're here, Potter." No one moved. "Are you afraid that I'll hurt you again, widdle Potter? Come out and play!"

"I already told you my favorite game is Scrabble," a voice came, echoing across the waterfront, "And as I don't see you carrying a gameboard, I think I'll decline, thanks."

"Funny, Potter. Very funny." In a quick move he levitated a soldier from a rooftop to him, who struggled until the wand was pressed against his head. "Get out here, Potter, or another's death will be on your hands."

A chuckle. "You could use some originality, Thomas. Really, that must be the oldest trick in the book. But, very well, I'll come out." And hundreds of gasps were muted as the Lord Azkaban stepped out from behind an abandoned building, his hood pulled down, revealing a thin face, short, messy black hair, and emerald eyes that were far too old for the face they occupied. But the most distinguishing factor of all was the bloodred scar on his forehead.

"Ah," Voldemort said, smirking. "So I was correct in my assumption."

Harry raised an eyebrow. "That depends entirely on what your assumption was, Tom. If it was that I am the Lord Azkaban, then it was correct. If it was that I am, in fact, a giant chicken in a bunny suit with a pink bow tie, it was wrong."

The Dark Lord laughed. "I see pain doesn't take away your biting wit, boy... or at least not as little pain as I delivered yesterday. You do realize that you don't have nearly enough people in that warehouse to face me?"

And Harry grinned. "No, but in the warehouse and the hospital combined I do. NOW!"

The battle was on.

Chapter Thirty: Disappear

At Harry's cry, action sprung. The Stun Bombers hidden in the upper levels released grenades, effectively knocking out the first two lines of Voldemort's army before they caught on and began shooting return spells towards them. The Aurors and Unspeakables of several countries burst out of the buildings, shooting spells with no real aim as the smoke cleared, just hoping to hit someone.

The mermen that remained began launching rocks at the dark forces from behind, while the grindylows, at the urging of said mermen, climbed up onto the shore and began to attack. One by one, chuters dropped from the rooftops to join the fray.

Harry had been separated from his rival in the onslaught, and now looked around, trying to find the leader of the dark army. Or he had been until several Death Eaters had decided to surround him. Then he was busy with attacking. "Spin, drop, kick, up, punch, stun him, dodge, roll..." Harry muttered to himself as he fought. Nimi's Militia training had come in decidedly handy. In few moments, all seven Death Eaters were unconscious.

Free for a moment from hassle, he looked around and finally spotted the so-called "Dark Lord". With a grim smile, he set off. His first obstacle was a troll. The one blessing was that it was a Cave Troll, and therefore smaller than the one he had faced in his First Year. It still, however, was decidedly difficult to best, as there was no handy club to bash it's head in with. He briefly contemplated trying to stick his wand up it's nose for old times sake, but hurriedly decided against it and felled it with a quickly conjured boulder that dropped, conveniently, on it's head.

The next problem was two vampyres. Well, not really a problem, as Harry had Transfigured a stake and taken them down within moments. Of course, waiting behind them were four more Death Eaters... He dodged a quickly shot 'Crucio' and returned four 'Stupefy's in quick succession. The man dodged the first two, was hit by the third, and the fourth went astray and hit another of them. Two down, two to go.

He rolled to the side as one of the two left shot a curse at him, and flipped over the head of a vampyre that got in his way, staking him as

he turned and landed. He dodged another spell from the second man, which turned out to be a fire spell as it singed the edge of his cloak. He glared at the man. "Okay, that was uncalled for." The two were Stunned within seconds.

Nimi, in the meantime, was dealing with one of the giants, which was a chore in and of itself, even without the several Death Eaters and vampyres circling her. She had officially decided that anyone who had not faced a giant in battle would never be able to comprehend what it was like. Not only were they totally loyal to Voldemort, meaning that they wanted to crush all of the Azkabanians, they were huge. Not huge as in a prize-winning bovine, but huge as in "Holy shit, the bugger's bigger than my house! And my neighbor's house! And their grandmother's house! And *my* grandmother's house! All combined!" Not exactly the best revelation.

She was at a loss for what to do when a sudden idea came to her. She darted between the giant's legs and, before it had a chance to turn around, grabbed a hold of his pant leg and began to climb up his back. Ducking out of the way as he reached around his back to try and knock her off, she made it to his shoulder and managed to Stun him by aiming straight at his head from about four inches away. She ran down his back as he fell, and made it to the ground just as he landed with a 'whump' of displaced air, squishing about eight Death Eaters that hadn't managed to get out of the way in time. She smirked. "Never mess with the child of a Marauder."

Luna and Nikolai were battling back to back, facing the eighteen Death Eaters surrounding them. Sirius and Mel were fighting ten vampyres together while Ari faced off with a troll nearby. Remus was leading the other ex-lycanthropes into battle, and war raged throughout the waterfront, people from both sides falling, leaving behind only anger and hatred.

And, of course, pain.

∴ Eight Hours, Thirty-Four Minutes, and Thirty-Seven Seconds Later ∴

"Damn it!" Harry roared, slamming his hands down on the table as he glared at Fudge. "Don't you get it? Yes, I called the Aurors and

Unspeakables to the battle! I need help, or my people were going to die. It was their choice to come, not mine. I didn't make them do anything."

He was not in the best mood. Though they had only lost ten soldiers, and to him that was still too many, no one should have died... Though they had only lost ten soldiers, Voldemort had called back his forces and Disapparated before Harry had had a chance to get anywhere near him. Well, at least he had pissed him off as a consolation prize, and his forces had taken out a good third of the Dark Lord's by his calculations. Of course, Tom still had far too many...

"Look Potter-" Fudge hissed. He was cut off as he was shoved against the wall by Nimi, a hand on his throat and her finger shaking into her face, punctuating every word she spoke.

"Just because you now know his name does not give you the right to call him by it," she said slowly, calmly, as though talking to a child. "He is the Lord Azkaban, and you will refer to him as such. He has more significance to the Magical community than you do in your little finger." She released him and his hands immediately went to his throat as he gasped for air.

Nimi strode back to Harry's side; he had a small smile on his face and nodded slightly at her. ":Thanks for that:."

":Don't mention it:." Dumbledore stood and glanced at Nimi before walking to stand next to Fudge on the other side of the table.

"It would be best, Cornelius, to respect them. They do tell the truth, and they did need those reinforcements. You know as well as I that had Azkaban fallen, we would have lost a very important part of wizarding society. I doubt that the Ministry as we know it would be the same, if Mr. Po- Lord Azkaban died."

"They do know then," Harry stated. It was not a question. "Good. Then I can stop wearing this bleeding hood all the time." Pulling down the aforementioned article, he turned to look at Dumbledore and Fudge again. "Now, if you two don't have anything else to say..."

Fudge's face began to turn purple and he opened his mouth, no doubt to say something amazingly stupid. Dumbledore, however, cut him off. "Actually, yes H- Lord Azkaban. Your NEWT scores have arrived." He pulled a bundle of parchment out of his robes and handed it to Harry, who accepted it with a nod. "I also have a resume for each of you in there; I thought that you would be needing it soon, as legally you must only be at Hogwarts for another week. I was hoping, however--"

"No Dumbledore," he said softly. "I'm not going to stay. Do you remember what I said that day back in the courtroom? I told you that I'm not your bloody saviour anymore, that you can save yourselves. Well, I may not be a saviour, and I may not be a hero, and I may never force anyone to save themselves when I can help them..." He paused for a moment. The room was silent but for the scratching of the quills of the three reporters that had been allowed in to the meeting and people breathing. Harry suddenly smiled and continued.

"And while I will never trust you again, and never believe in you, and will always hate you for what you've done to me, I forgive you." Nimi was staring at him, as was Dumbledore, but no one seemed to be able to interrupt in fear of breaking the moment. "I like to think that I forgive easily. I forgive the Dursley's for what they did to me. I forgive Snape for holding grudges against a dead man, a man who died to save what he loved the most. And I forgive the wizarding world for sentencing me to Hell without a damn.

"I forgive, but I do not forget. I will never, ever believe in any of you again. I am not the blind, foolish, trusting little boy you used to know. I cannot just accept the words on face value of a man who offers me his hand and saves me from the dark, because I know that there is no true face value, that everyone has things to hide, that you may preach all you want but you aren't a saint. And that, sir, is why I cannot stay at Hogwarts. Good day."

He turned on his heel and strode out of the room, Nimi following behind him, a proud and awed look on her face. As the rest of those in the meeting stood dumbstruck, one reporter murmured "Now him, I would follow into battle any day."

And no one in the room could find the strength, or the reason, to disagree.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConqueror

Nimi turned to Harry as they sat in the carriage, riding back to Azkaban. “That was an amazing speech Harry,” she said softly. Her unspoken words were thought so loudly in her mind that it didn’t matter that she hadn’t sent them to him. *Not as amazing as you.*

He blushed slightly and shrugged. “Well, it was the truth.” He abruptly changed the topic. “Now I know you’re just dying to see the NEWT results... Here’s yours and your transcript, I’ll give you Luna’s and Nikolai’s too, as you’re much less likely to lose them...”

She accepted the greater half of the packet with a nervous grin and separated a sheet from it. “On three?”

“On three. One-“

“Two-“

“Three!” they exclaimed in one voice, unfolding their sheets with quick, practiced motions and a crumpling of paper. Silence descended for a moment as two sets of eyes scanned the results, before Nimi jumped up with a small shout of delight.

“Yes! All O’s!”

“Me too!” Harry said with a wide smile, impulsively hugging her. She started before wrapping her arms around him and holding him tightly. He absentmindedly tucked her head under his chin, noticing how comfortable it was. After a moment they pulled apart, both blushing slightly. It was amazingly embarrassing to have each other’s knowledge and know that the other liked them that way, at least a bit...

Nimi cleared her throat. “Right. Er, this is great! We can get just about any job we want! Of course, we already have jobs,” she mused, “But

we could be registered Healers, or Aurors, that would be handy. I hear the Zauberzeilichs have a great program...”

Harry nodded thoughtfully. “Yes, it would be nice to study abroad, learn other customs... you know I’ve never been out of the UK? And I’m the Lord Azkaban, too. I really need to get around to doing that...”

She nodded in return. “We do need to fix that.” He chuckled lightly, and she smiled at him. Harry felt his heart flutter slightly in his chest, and he opened his mouth as though to say something. He was cut off, however, as the carriage jerked to a halt and the door on Nimi’s left, his right, opened.

“We’re here now sir, missus,” the driver said, his Cockney accent shining through, a jovial yet serious look in his eye.

“Thank you Eb,” Harry said. “And please, please please please, call me Harry. Or at least Azkaban. Sir is far too formal.”

“And my name is Nimi,” the other occupant of the carriage put in as she climbed out, Harry following her. “Please make use of it.”

Eb smirked. “Will do sir, missus.” Before they could say a word, he had climbed back in the carriage and was gone.

“That man,” Nimi muttered, shaking her head. Harry chuckled. “The others will be wondering how it went.”

“Yes.” He smirked. “And I’m sure Luna and Nikolai would love to see their NEWT results...”

Nimi grinned as she caught on to his train of thought. “Of course, a little begging wouldn’t hurt...”

And they set off towards the Castle Azkaban, just enjoying the other’s presence and trying very hard to deny anything other than friendship.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

“WHAT?”

Harry's shout echoed through the Castle, and Nimi and Sirius, who were standing with him in the Throne Room, winced. "Harry, calm down," Nimi said cautiously. "I'm sorry I didn't tell you, I forgot all about it-"

"Forgot something like THAT?" Harry shouted. "How the hell do you forget something like that?"

She winced again, and Sirius took over. "Look Harry, it won't be so bad. Really, all you have to do is get up in front of the citizens and the higher officials from worldwide governments and have a crown put on your head and give a little speech-"

"Acutally," Nimi interrupted, "It's not even a crown. It's just a gold circlet. Lords get gold, Ladies would get white gold when a girl has to inherit... I think there's only ever been two ruling Ladies of Azkban..." she mused. At Harry's glare, she hurried on. "Not that it's important of course. But really Harry, it won't be so bad... Honestly, don't you want it to be official?"

He snorted. "I thought it was already official. And no, really, it won't be that bad, all I have to do is give a speech in front of loads of worldwide dignitaries-"

"A speech you'll have time to prepare," she said sternly. "And with as good as you did with that impromptu one at the Ministry, it shouldn't be a problem." Harry was left mouthing like a goldfish at her cold bluntness. "The coronation is to be June 21st, the first day of summer. I'd recommend you start getting that speech ready." She swept out of the room in an almost Snape-like manner... it was with a start that he realized she was *related* to Snape.

He turned to Sirius, still looking shocked. His godfather laughed. "She's telling the truth. I think I'll go coax the story of that 'impromptu speech' of yours out of her..." He was gone by the time what he had said sunk in for Harry.

"HEY!"

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

At last, June 21st came around after several months full of stress. They had, after their mandatory time there, left Hogwarts and returned to Azkaban. This was nice, because Harry could have panic fits about the coronation in his own castle instead of Albus Dumbledore's.

The day of the coronation, Harry was standing nervously just to the side of the platform that had been erected for the occasion. There was, thankfully, a podium on it; no one would see his hands nervously twitching. He was wearing the traditional ceremonial Azkaban robes... heavy dark grey and black, but oddly comfortable. He sought out Nimi where she was standing on the other side. She gave him a thumbs up. He gulped and nodded.

Nimi stepped forward onto the platform, having apparently already cast a Sonorous as he had at the loudness of her throat being cleared to get attention. Not that she really needed it; all was silent, all eyes on her. He couldn't help but notice she looked very pretty in the set of white robes... He shook his head to clear it as she began.

"Welcome to the coronation of Harry James Potter, Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles." A cheer rose, and she waited for it to die down before continuing. "I am High War Admiral and Primary Advisor Nimi Gemini Stardreamer, designated to crown our Lord. Harry, if you would come forward." Harry gulped and stepped onto the platform, facing her. All was eerily silent.

"Please kneel." He did so. No matter how many times they had practiced this, it still made him amazingly nervous. *Please don't let me screw up...* "Harry James Potter, do you accept the responsibilities that come as the Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles?"

"I do," he said, his voice clear.

"Do you swear to uphold the morals of our people and protect them in any way you can?"

"I do."

"Do you swear to follow the laws of our people and treat them fairly?"

“I do.”

“Do you swear to do whatever you can do for the people of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles and never turn your back to their suffering until there is no other choice?”

“I do.”

“Then repeat after me. ‘I, Harry James Potter, do solemnly swear to fulfill my duties as the Lord of my people for as long as it is within my power, and keep from my lands the spread of fear, pain, and despair as best as I am able.’”

“I, Harry James Potter, do solemnly swear to fulfill my duties as the Lord of my people for as long as it is within my power, and keep from my lands the spread of fear, pain, and despair as best as I am able.”

She smiled down at him and pulled out the circlet. “Then I hereby declare you, Harry James Potter, our Lord of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles. May your rule be one of peace.”

He lowered his head as she fit the circlet on it. A sense of power influxed to him, and he realized, startled, that the land recognized him in a way it had never done before... It recognized him as Lord Azkaban, and the people were bowing, and he felt so much more powerful...

He stood and impulsively kissed Nimi on the cheek. He grinned roughly as he took her place at the pedestal and her face went bright red and gained an expression of shock. He smiled out at those gathered, who were now straightened and looking at him in awe.

“Greetings. I am Lord Harry James Potter of Caer Azkaban and the Druid Isles, and I’m here to tell you a story.” Several people looked startled, but he continued. “This is the story of a boy. His parents were killed by Voldemort when he was very small. He watched at least one of them die; he doesn’t remember for sure.

“After this, he was sent to live with a family that didn’t want him or care about him. He grew up in ignorance of what he could do until he

went to a school where he was accepted. But, eventually, even his newfound friends turned on him, and he was left alone once more.

“But he found a new family, and new friends, and he was finally happy. Yet he couldn’t help but wonder; how long would it last? For everything good in his life ended so abruptly, that he could not help but wonder what cliff hanger this chapter of his life would have.

“You are no doubt wondering the name of this boy.” His voice grew louder, and gained even more emotion. “He does not have a name, because he is not a boy. His life is the same as hundreds of other children’s around the world. Children who have lost everything to Voldemort. Boys and girls, and men and women... people. People are what Voldemort thrives in destroying.

“And that is why he must be stopped. I have no doubt that he will be, someday soon, but only if we ban together. Only if we ban together will I never need to tell that story again, will no one need to tell it. Because our children have a right to live in a world where they are not terrorized by a hypocritical megalomaniac who has killed off entire families, men, woman, children, toddlers, babies, infants... The list of his victims is seemingly neverending.”

His voice dropped to a whisper, only hearable because of the Sonorous. “And only by working together can we make that list end.” His voice rose again, pure feeling coarsing through it. “We must fight this eveil. We must make it end, for our children’s sake if not our own. I am asking you here and now to stand up together as one body against an enemy who would destroy us all, and look at him in the face and tell him no. No, he shall not have our lives. No, he will destroy no more people. Because we, the Azkabanians and the world, are ready to stand and fight!”

At his last proclomation, a roar broke out in the crowd, a roar that did not die even as he waved and thanked them, ended the Sonorous spell, and offered Nimi his hand. She took it with a shy smile and they walked off together, his golden circlet gleaming in the sunlight against his dark hair, oblivious to the cheers that followed them.

**HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero
VillainSaviourConqueror**

The rest of June passed amazingly quickly. Harry was amazed to look at his calendar and see that it was already July 2nd. "How did the time fly by so fast?" he asked Luna, confused.

She shrugged. "I don't know. You've been busy, for one thing, and for another, Voldemort hasn't attacked. That's got to throw off your inner clock."

He smiled slightly at her joke. "True." He then frowned. "Although, that isn't good. If he hasn't attacked, he's planning something."

"And if he's been planning for this long," she finished, "It's something big."

"Exactly."

And so, his next few days were spent guaranteeing alliances with several groups, including those that had helped in the Battle for Azkaban and several others, and testing out Nimi's Militia Training in the back of his head on the matter of swords (as he had conveniently borrowed the Sword of Gryffindor with no intention of returning it; well, he was Gryffindor's descendant after all, didn't that make it rightfully his?) and daggers and the like. It was always best to be prepared.

Which is the main reason why he wasn't all that surprised when, on the morning of the 8th of July, Sirius shook him awake with a worried look and only the words "Hogwarts is under attack."

He leapt out of bed. "Right. You, Mel, Ari, Remus, and Nikolai start contacting all of our allies. Have Luna double check with the Americans and tell them the situation, see if they won't help. Is Nimi up?" His Godfather nodded. "Good. Have Nimi keep track of the Hogwarts Map on the wall of the Strategy Room. I'll be along as soon as I'm dressed."

Sirius nodded and race out of the room. Harry raced over to his dresser and pulled out a pair of plain black robes as quickly as he could. He was down to the Strategy Room in under two minutes. "How are we doing?" he panted, out of breath.

Remus walked over. "The Americans have agreed, grudgingly might I add, to help, though I can't blame them if they don't want to get involved. They weren't targeted in the last war, don't wish to be in this one. The rest of our allies are already on their way there, as is the Militia. Nimi's giving orders at the Map through the Comm as your stand-in."

The Comm, an ingenious device connecting all of Azkaban, had recently been set up to include all troops going into a battle the Azkabanians were participating in. As a result, Nimi or Harry could speak directly into their ears and give orders. "Excellent. We should be leaving in about thirty seconds. Get everyone ready."

He ran over to where Nimi was. "How's it going?"

She moved the comm microphone, which was attached to a headset that all of the troops and everyone in the room had hurriedly put on. "Good for now, though I'm not sure how long it will last. You ready to take command?"

Harry shook his head. "I need you to take this. I know I should," he continued as she opened her mouth, "But Nimi, today I am going to beat that bastard, and I won't have the concentration to give orders. Go on Code Orange."

Code Orange was the second highest of the Comm Codes they had devised. It meant that once the Commander (Harry) or Acting Commander (in this case, Nimi) judged the battle to be three fourths over, they would give final commands and turn off the headset to concentrate more on their own battles.

She squeezed her eyes tightly before opening them and clapping him on the shoulder. "Alright. Just know that I've got your back. You need any help with Tom, and you've got it."

He put his hand on her shoulder. "I know." He pulled back and turned to the others. "We ready to go?" At a chorus of 'Yes sir's, he pulled out a Portkey. Everyone gathered around and Harry activated it. His world dissolved into a mix of colour and sound, and his heart was pounding in his chest. He knew, deep in his heart, that this would truly be the Final Battle.

HeroVillainSaviourConquerorHeroVillainSaviourConquerorHero VillainSaviourConqueror

They landed on the Hogwarts grounds, though they were hardly recognizable as such. Students, teachers, and wizards of all nationalities were fighting against Voldemort and his army, and blood was being spilled on both sides.

Harry had thought he was lucky to nearly double the number of forces he had had at the Battle of Azkaban, but even with the teachers and students, they barely outnumbered the Dark Army. And half of the students didn't even know what they were doing. *At least Dumbledore had the sense to keep the First and Second Years in the Castle... either that or they're all dead, because I can't see any...*

Bile rose in his throat at the thought, and he forced himself to find Tom. Several Death Eaters were already heading his way, and he didn't have much time, that much he knew. He had to end this quickly, for the students' sake if no one else's. No more children deserved to die.

Finally he spotted him. The self-proclaimed 'Lord'. A cold feeling clenching his heart, he ran. This time, Tom was within his grasp. He was currently dueling with several Aurors at once on the lakeside, laughing. Harry was dimly aware that Nimi was following, but remembering her promise to have his back it didn't surprise him. He heard her stop as he came close and begin to duel Rodolphus LeStrange, but paid no attention. Every fibre of him was concentrated on his goal. Riddle.

His first attack was physical, because it was less expected. He rammed himself into Voldemort. The remaining two Aurors ran off to face Death Eaters, leaving Harry and Voldemort alone. Perfect. Riddle stood up to find Harry already in a fighting crouch, and smiled.

"You want to do this the filthy Muggle way? Fine." He flung off his cloak; Harry had never put his on. Riddle drew his sword first; embedded in the hilt was a green crystal, and the hilt itself seemed to be several snakes twisting around. "Custom made," he explained as he ran towards Harry, sword pointed straight at his neck.

Harry ducked and whirled out of the way at the last possible second, drawing his sword and catching Riddle in the stomach a bit in the same motion. He turned back to Harry, looking surprised. The younger man just raised an eyebrow.

For the next few moments, a clashing of swords could be heard if you listened over the rest of the sounds of battle. Both parties had gotten several cuts, though Harry was pleased to see that Tom hadn't gotten Harry with a cut nearly as bad as he had given the Dark Lord in the stomach. And then, predictably, Voldemort got bored. He almost nonchalantly used a wave of magic to send Harry flying. He managed to land on his feet, but sheathed his sword. Voldemort did the same. The Wizard's Duel had begun.

Harry ducked out of the way of a Killing Curse. "Don't waste any time, do you?" he asked, left eyebrow up in his hairline.

"Don't see the need," Riddle replied as Harry dodged another of the same curse. "Not much point really. We want each other dead, so let's just cut to the chase."

"Agreed," Harry said, sending a controlled blast of fire at the Dark Lord. As Voldemort struggled to put out his robes, Harry sent a burst of ice at him. This time, however, Tom was prepared and dodged.

"So, my other suspicion is confirmed," Voldemort mused, his robes now put out.

"No, I'm not a giant chicken in a bunny suit!" Harry mock protested. "I swear!" He rolled out of the way of a Cruciatus.

"Oh, not at all. You are the Heir of the Six," Riddle said with a smirk. "Of course, that isn't going to save you here..."

"That's what you think."

They traded spells in silence for a few more minutes, but it was obvious both were tiring. Finally, Riddle spoke once more. "Why do you even bother to fight? You know you cannot win."

“No, I don’t know that,” Harry replied. “And I fight for everyone who’s ability to do so you’ve taken away. I fight for every life you’ve ruined, and you know what? They fight with me, and that is why I know you will DIE!” The last word was shouted as Harry finished what he had been preparing for the last few minutes. He cupped his hands in front of him and shot out the other thing he had worked on for the past few days.

A burst of Darkness shout out first, consuming the Dark Lord in everything he had sunk himself into, raising his levels of Dark Magic so high that they nearly overflowed, frying him. As it was, he was in extreme pain and almost didn’t notice as the lightning bolt hit him in the chest, overloading what was left of his heart. Next was the ice; before he knew it, he was encased in it, and shortly shattered into several pieces by the dozens of rocks flying at him. A wall of flame surrounded what was left of him, and as his spirit, the thing that had lingered behind for thirteen years after the last time, flew through the wall of flames at him, Harry used up all he had to send out pure Light.

This was the true purpose of the Darkness before. It had completely consumed his soul, and he hadn’t had time to let the effects wear off or be countered by good acts (not that they would have been) before being hit with a blast of the exact opposite of what he was made of.

As the spirit vanished in a flash of light and Harry heard a woman scream, he felt himself falling into what seemed to be a bright golden light. He was vaguely aware of Nimi racing towards him, shouting his name. He reached for her hand and had almost grasped it when he had fallen out of her reach and into unforgiving blackness.

Epilogue: Tears

Nimi sat in the kitchen, poking the scrambled eggs around on her plate. It was raining outside, and the day was so similar to that day that now seemed so long ago, the day when they had gone to Hogwarts...

She idly wondered who would take over as the Lord Azkaban with Harry... indisposed. He wasn't dead. He was just gone. He would come back. It had only been a day since he had gone, but already she was losing hope...

"I can't sense him! He isn't there! He's gone!"

She remembered shrieking at her father, shaking him by the shoulders. He had resigned himself, she knew. Harry was... he was dead. She had to accept it. She had to. But somehow, she just couldn't... Couldn't imagine life without Harry there. She no longer knew how she had ever lived without him, and had no desire to remember. But she was going to have to.

She pushed her chair out from the table and went out onto the balcony. It was three in the morning. No one else was awake, unless someone was crying in their rooms. It wouldn't surprise her.

She stood out in the rain. It was her favorite weather, it always had been. She remembered Harry telling her about being told that it was lost loved ones crying. Harry... She spun around in the rain, staring up at the sky, the tears on her face mingling with the rain, the tears of lost loved ones... of Harry...

"Why?" she whimpered, no longer spinning, just staring at the sky. "Why did you have to leave me, Harry? I need you, damnit!"

And as she collapsed on the balcony in a sobbing heap, as loved ones continued shed their own tears, she was unable to shake the image of a grinning, messy-black haired boy after kissing her on the cheek.

The End... Perhaps...

A/N: Well, there are several goodies below; the title of the sequel for those who didn't hear it before, what I currently have as the summary of the sequel, a teaser, main characters, things cut from the original version, and a few tidbits.

Title:

Subject, Ruler, Finder, Wanderer

Current Summary:

At the end of the Final Battle, Harry finds himself in another world... a world where he died as a baby, where werewolves are locked away in silver cages, where Azkaban has been without a leader for four generations, and there is no Heir of the Six... he finds that he must fight Voldemort once again, unless he truly wishes to lose all he holds dear...

Teaser:

She is walking down a corridor of the Castle Azkaban, the one leading to the Throne Room by the looks of it. She is wearing her white robes, which is all she really wears now, her hair loose behind her and a tad longer than it is now, about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way to her elbows. It is slightly curlier too; then again, it does always get curlier when it's longer, so it makes sense. She adjusts the circlet on her head and continues on her way, her feet in elegant white slippers pit-pattering on the floor.

Suddenly, she collapses, clutching her head.

The scene changes. She's wearing her Primary Advisor uniform, her hair a bit shorter and straighter than it is now, the circlet gone and a Death Eater. She's battling him and watching Harry duel Voldemort out of the corner of her eye at the same time, ready to jump in the moment he needs help. She turns her head back to the Death Eater for a brief second, and there is a terrible scream...

The scene changes again.

She now finds herself back in the Death Chamber, chanting the ritual to get out the man she doesn't know is her father. She realizes, suddenly, that the last two have been memories, not dreams... and suddenly it switches from what she knows. Her father looks up from where he lies on the floor.

"You are a fool," he hisses. "You couldn't save him. It's your fault. You said you would back him up, jump in if he needed help..."

"No," she murmurs, falling to the ground and holding her hands over her ears. "No... you're wrong..." But she knows that he isn't. The scene changes once more, and she's sitting with Luna in the carriage on the way back from shopping. The girl slowly stops laughing and looks at her.

"It's all your fault. Your fault. He should still be alive. Your fault. Your fault..."

Her ears are covered once more as she blocks out the horrible mantra with one of her own. "No, no, no no no no no nonononono..." The scenes are going by quicker now; they almost flash like scenes in a theater, as though she isn't a part of them, they exist outside of her. Nikolai, her mother, Remus, Ari... they all accuse her, and she drowns them out, until it gets to the worst part of all.

She's dueling the Death Eater again, and she whirls at the scream. Voldemort is gone in a flash of white, and a golden light is surrounding Harry. "HARRY!" she cries, running to him, reaching out. He reaches back to her, but he's fading, falling... she can't reach him...

And then, all she can see is his face. "I should be there," he snarls at her. "I'm supposed to be alive. I don't know how I could have ever cared about an idiot like you. You ruined everything. Your fault. All your fault. Your fault..."

"No," she sobs, as he continues to accuse her. "No, no... no...please... no..."

Main Characters:

Our Heroine: Nimi Stardreamer-Black, the former-Lieutenant-turned High War Admiral and Primary Advisor.

Our Hero; Lord Harry James Potter of Caer Azkaban and the Druis Isles, the once abused child, now one of the most powerful men in the world.

Other Primary Characters: Sirius Black, Remus Lupin, Meliara Fillibuster, Auriga Sinistra, Severus Snape, and Albusw Dumbledore.

Secondary Characters: Arianrhod Lupin, Meliara Black, Sirius Black, Remus Lupin, Filius Flitwick, Luna Lovegood, and Nikolai Nadreski.

Cut From the Original:

In the first version, Draco ended up turning down the Dark Lord's offer to being a Death Eater and joining Mel and Ari in the family cell and being rescued by Harry, Sirius, and Remus.

In the original, Nimi wasn't going to be Sirius and Mel's daughter or adopted, just a citizen of Azkaban.

In my original draft, Mel and Ari escaped on their own... but then there wasn't the cool scene with Harry yelling at Dumbledore and Remus freaking out...

At first, I had Snape marked as a bad guy, but I lost all control of his character... he's a wily one. :)

At one point in time, the story was going to be longer and have no sequel... I like this way better though.

Tidbits:

Warning: Some minor spoilers for the sequel!

Nimi is named as Harry's succesor; the Lady Azkaban.

Remus is, indeed, one of the werewolves locked in silver cages.

Harry and Nimi have more fluffy moments.

More Harry/Voldie banter.

Mel is listed as a Fillibuster in the main characters as in the other world, she and Sirius are not married; Sirius and Remus are listed twice as they appear both in the other world and "back home".

A/N: Well, that will hopefully be out soon, but first... must finish next chapter of AV before I am strangled... yes. Thank you to everyone who supported this fic or gave me constructive criticism! I really appreciate it, especially to Surrarin, who has gotten me off my ass and bacfk typing many times. Thank you all! It's been an amazing journey; this is Aerin Jadestar, signing off.

Aerin